



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

STANFORD LIBRARIES



6
271
Walters, Last



**STANFORD
UNIVERSITY
LIBRARIES**

HAPPY AT LAST;

OR

SIGH NO MORE LADIES:

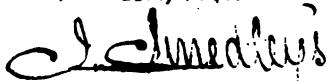
A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS:

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL, KENDAL,

March 13th, 1805.



BY HENRY SUMMERSETT

*(Of the Kendal, Ulverstone, Harrogate, Beverly, Richmond,
Ripon and Whitby Theatres.)*

ULVERSTONE:

PRINTED BY J. SOULBY.

Sold by L. B. Seeley, Ave Maria Lane, Chancery and
Whitrow, Aldgate, London.

1805.

2/6 SJK

R 5499
33 H3

To the Ladies and Gentlemen
Of Ulverstone and Kendal,
This Comedy,
With sentiments of respect and gratitude,
Is Inscribed,
By their very obedient Servant,
HENRY SUMMERSETT.

P R E F A C E.

THE Author of the following piece thought he could write a play: He took up his pen, hastily composed the scenes which he has now ventured to print, and having finished the fifth act, he had the audacity to suppose that his comedy might succeed on the stage. The Covent Garden manager said it *certainly would not please*; and, as the author had previously weighed that gentleman's consequence, against his own insignificance, never did a repulsed scribbler receive a manuscript with less chagrin. It has since been performed in a respectable provincial theatre, and the audience treated it with kindness, tho' they were well acquainted with the London manner of sinking an author and discomforting the actors. It assuredly is no literary curiosity; but it may chance to fall into

P R E F A C E.

into the hands of some readers, who never suffer conscience to upbraid them, for spending half an hour in idleness, and with such, at least, I shall be secure. No praise is expected; no censure dreaded. Taste may condemn; but Morality will have little cause to complain: The former may say it is a *vile* composition; and the latter allow it the *extraordinary* merit of being harmless.

P R O L O G U E,
Spoken by Mr. CLIFTON.

FROM the unpolish'd author of our play,
Whose fears your smiles alone can chase away,
I come; and in the trembling scribbler's name,
Entreat you to be sparing of your blame,
To judge with candour, to support his cause,
And cheer a poor adventurer with applause.
No lively beauties of a classic mind,
No fisahes of enlivening wit you'll find;
" He tells a homely tale, as nature taught,"
And lays no claim to eleganee of thought.
His head you may, his heart you cannot blame,
For Vice he loathes, and execrates her name:
And tho' his muse may fail to give delight,
Tho' dull indifference be his lot to-night,
Morality shall still sustain his cause,
And virtue own he has not scorn'd her laws.
If he your generous plaudits should obtain,
And, after all his fears, a verdict gain,
The apprehensive pain will leave his breast,
His grateful thoughts will never be supprest;
His gladsome voice your kindness shall proclaim,
And still to merit your applause he'll aim:
Happy at last, and all his troubles o'er,
Joy shall triumphant reign—He'll sigh *no more*.

~~~~~

D R A M A T I S   P E R S O N A E.

Sir DAVID POPPLETON.....Mr. MEADOWS.

Sir. WILLIAM THORPLEY.....Mr. STUART.

HARRY THORPLEY.....Mr. NEVILLE.

RUSSEL .....Mr. DARLEY.

MORRIS .....Mr. CLIFTON.

PETER BLUFFMAN.....Mr. DUNNING.

BOB WHEATEAR.....Mr. SMITH.

JAMES.....Mr. WORRALL.

POST-BOY.....Mr. GEORGE.

TRICK.....Mr. DAVIS.

MISS THORPLEY.....Mrs. BUTLER.

JULIET.....Mrs. DARLEY.

Mrs. WELWYN.....Mrs. FENTON.

Mrs. FONDLY .....Mrs. FILDEW.

MOLLY BUTTERMEAD.....Mrs. MARTIN.



---

## *HAPPY AT LAST:*

OR  
*SIGH NO MORE LADIES.*

---

### **ACT I.**

*SCENE, the outside of MORRIS's cottage, with a rural prospect behind. MORRIS and Mrs. WELWYN discovered, sitting under a tree. MORRIS closes a book, and they advance to the front of the stage.*

**MORRIS.**

SO ends the story: The author has charmingly blended the lively and pathetic; we leave the virtuous characters in happiness, and the last page is truly humorous. Still Emmeline does not smile.

Mrs. W. Smile! The good, the *innocent* alone can smile.

MORRIS. Yet I have seen the vicious and depraved, with laughing countenances: Sunshine in their cheeks, and corruption in their hearts.

Mrs. W. (*alarmed*) The vicious and depraved!—My brother—you meant not—

MORRIS. What?

Mrs. W. That I *might* appear gay—that I was such as you mentioned?

MORRIS. If I did, may Heaven think ill of me! I love and pity you; while I have a heart you shall dwell in it. I have protected you with this arm, and let not your enemy come within its reach.

Mrs. W. My brother! Let me kiss the lips that

## HAPPY AT LAST: OR

uttered those consoling words—and tho' I soon may rest in yon little consecrated spot, while the bell, unheard by me, calls the humble villagers to the house of prayer, yet may you live in happiness and peace, till the glossy locks of yon peasant lad are whitened by the winters of age.

MORRIS. Dear, romantic girl! Why will you talk thus, when you know it distracts me? For Heaven's sake spare yourself and me. I have many fears of my own, and you increase them; I am burthened with apprehensions, and you—(*Peter Bluffman whistles without.*)—But hark! Some one approaches.

*Enter PETER.*

PETER. Servant, sir; servant, ma'am. What a fine morning here be. The corn do look so purely, the trees be so green, and the birds so full of twitteration, that it do a body's heart good to gape at 'em. Glad to see you so well, sir; but poor Mrs. Welwyn—Will you have a posy, ma'am? I gathered it just now, in Parson's garden.

Mrs. W. (*taking it with a faint smile.*) For whom did you pluck these flowers, Peter?

PETER. Why, if you must know ma'am, I did promise my Bet a nosegay, to go to church with on sunday; but she ben't very fond of myrtle, and them there sort of smelling things; so she shall have a genteel bunch of full blown tulips, to put in her bosom.

MORRIS. And how is your young lady this morning, Peter?

PETER. He, he! I thought, sir, you would soon be axing that; and I wish I could say, "she is very well, I thank'ee, sir."

MORRIS. (*with alarm*) How! what do you mean? Is she not in health?

PETER. Now, dont, sir, don't ye be putting yourself in a flusteration; because if things be a little badish, that's not the way to mend'em.

Mrs. W.

## SIGH NO MORE LADIES.

Mrs. W. Bad! Surely no accident—

MORRIS. Heaven forbid! But tell us, Peter—

PETER. Nay, sir, for the matter of that, I have but little to tell'ee. It mayn't be proper, sir, for servants to carry tales: But last night, Sir David and Miss Juliet had a little bit of a dispute.

MORRIS. Impossible! His love and *her* duty—But what could occasion it?

PETER. I can't tell, sir, to a certainty. A French mounseer came, last night, with letters from his master, Sir William Thingimbob—I forgot what ye do call 'um—So Sir David desired him to be sent into the parlour; and when I opened the door for him—He, he, he!—He made such a queer face, and bowed to I, just so, (*mimics*)—I'll be burnt if he didn't make me quite ashamed.

MORRIS. Go on, Peter: Pray be quick with your story.

PETER. I will, sir; I will. After mounseer had been with Sir David about ten minutes, he came skipping into servants hall; when our Molly, the cook, and Jack, the huntsman, began to titter and giggle. The Frenchman looked deadly black at' em; and I told' em it was'nt decent haviour: Says I, "Always treat a body as you'd like to be treated yourselves: Mounseer, we'll have a glass of ale together. Here's your health, and good prosperatio'n to you, as long as you ben't an enemy to King George and our country."

MORRIS. Well, but Sir David and his daughter?

PETER. So then mounseer and I grew mighty great friends; and as I do think it one's duty to be kind to a stranger, I'se sure had he ax'd for a few frogs for supper, I'd have gone and look'd for some, in the ditch at bottom of the garden. But he did eat just the same as myself, and when he saw the cold sirloin; "Ah, ha!" he cries—Ah, ha! de fawt de lean—O, de *roast* beef ov oold Englaht! O, de oold Enghisht roost beef!

## HAPPY AT LAST: OR

beef!" (*sings and mimics awkwardly*)—He, he,—twat  
so queer.

MORRIS. And after supper—

PETER. Aye, sir, then the Frenchman went down to the Bull's Head, to look after some things he expected by stage coach; when he came back, Sir David desired to see him again; so he went to him, and then he came down, and said that the Baronet and his daughter were having a—a—frawcro, as he called it—But I soon found mounseer meant a quarrel, for Sir David rung the bell, most hugeously; and just as I entered the parlour, Miss Juliet left it in tears.

MORRIS. In tears—Juliet in tears!

PETER. Yes, sir, and I did almost blubber myself: Lord, Sir David, said I, with all the friendship in the world, what can be the matter? "What's that to you, you thick headed dog," said he—Yes, he called I a dog, sir—And then he struck I with his cane—Hollo! says I, let's ha' no more of that tho', for I'se an Englishman, and don't like these here sort of things—Light me to my chamber," says he—Could a dog understand that, says I—" Didn't I strike you?" Ees you did—" Well, here's half a crown for you"—I'll be domn'd if I take it—Then he got up, and shook my hand—And he said, Good night, Peter, and God blefs you!—" Lauk a daisy! I stood stock still, and began a crying.

Mrs. W. Did you see any more of Miss Juliet?

PETER. Not till this morning, madam, when she did come to I, and told me to bring this little letter to your brother.

MORRIS. A letter! why not give it to me at first?

PETER. Lauk! Because I didn't think of it: But there it is, and when you have read it, do' be so koind as to tell me whether it requires an answer.

MORRIS. (*aside*) The simplicity of this fellow never till now was tormenting. Emmeline hear what your friend has written. (*reads*) "Come to me, as soon as you receive this; for I have strange and unpleasant

## SIGH NO MORE LADIES.

unpleasant news to tell you. You will find me where we parted last night: I shall expect you impatiently, as I cannot possibly be more than half an hour absent from the Hall."

PETER. Well, sir? What be I to say to my leady?

MORRIS. Nothing: Nothing: You should not have kept the letter from me a moment. Do not go to Miss Juliet, but to Sir David. Something strange and unpleasant? Ah, Morris! How long must it be, before you hail the return of happiness. [Exit.

PETER. I hope, ma'am, your brother ben't angry with I, for I should be main sorry to offend him; and so ma'am, I do wish you a good morning.

[Exit.

Mrs. W. Good morning, Peter. What can have happened to my friend? I am impatient to know and shall anxiously look for my brother's return. These flowers are already fading: How like the happiness of human life! I once knew real pleasure, but for the loss of it, who is so much to be accused as myself? I was too regardless of security—Wretched moralist! Your own indiscretions be on your head! Yet there was one, a cruel one, who participated—An agent that—Oh, Belford! Belford! [Exit.



### SCENE II.

*Inside of a cottage. MOLLY BUTTERMEAD discovered knitting, and JULIET looking impatiently through the casement.*

JULIET.

Still I see nothing of him: He was not at home perhaps—or Peter—I am uneasy that he comes not; what's o'clock, Molly?

MOLLY. (turning her hour glass.) Lord blefs your little impatient heart, you ask'd me about a minute since, and I told you. It was just the same when I was

I was in love, five and thirty years ago. But, come, come, don't look so grave. What the dickens, Miss Juliet, can have happen'd since last night?

JULIET. Nothing, nothing of importance; I am a strange, silly girl; but we all have our follies, and I sometimes think that we should never know true felicity, if it were not for the intermixture of sorrow. I could not help crying this morning, Molly, but to-morrow I shall be as gay as a lark.

MOLLY. Well! Heaven send that you may: I like to see people merry, aye, and to be merry myself too. Odds heart! When I was of your age—I was as fat as neighbour Thompson's pig; my cheeks were as red as my sunday-petticoat, and I could sing like a blackbird. *(Sings.)*

“Twas when the sea was roaring

“With hollow blasts of wind,”

A lack a day! 'Tis all over with me now: Well, well, tho' I can no longer sing, thank Heaven I can talk. Don't you remember the long stories I us'd to tell you? One was about the murder'd lady's ghost, coming at midnight, to—

JULIET. Yes, yes—*(still looking out)* He comes—He's at the door: O, my heart, turn not coward at a time like this.

MOLLY. Yes, 'tis he, sure enough. Well, well: I must go and feed my poultry: *(Enter Morris.)* Good morning, sir, Good morning, Mr. Morris: O, he's a sweet man! *(aside.)* [Exit.]

MORRIS. It was owing to the simple negligence of your messenger, that I was not here before—Your note, Juliet—it has alarmed me; tell me what has happen'd.

JULIET. Oh Morris! What happiness it is to call you friend. I know you love me; for you have told me so; and you have a countenance on which deceit never drew a line; a tongue that never mov'd by the impulse of falsehood. *(takes his hand, and looks earnestly in his face.)*

MORRIS.

## SIGH NO MORE LADIES.

MORRIS. (*shrinking, as with recollection.*) Deceit! Falsehood!--Oh, Juliet! I may have been frail—guilty of error—But may shame lash me through the world, if ever I abuse your love! (*with energy.*)

JULIET. Then away, with Sorrow! See, Charles, how I banish her: Begone, pale-visag'd sorceress! (*smiling and waving her hand ideally.*) She flies to her groves of cypresses; and now I'll fly—

MORRIS. Where, my Juliet?

JULIET. Where I always hope to find protection, and undoubted sincerity—(*going off, but turns suddenly to him.*) Into your arms, Charles. But let me not thus sport with the shortness of time. My father, last night, threatened me with—not a new lesson on decorum—Nor a punishment for giddiness—But a lover, Charles.

MORRIS. A lover, Juliet! Are you serious? Explain.

JULIET. You know, that for some time past, Sir David has been making many alterations in the apartments, and seemingly preparing for the reception of visitors. I have frequently asked the occasion of all this; and he has, as frequently, assured me that it was only to entertain an old friend, who had promised to spend a month with him at the hall.

MORRIS. Proceed, Juliet; I fear the sequel of your story is unpleasant.

JULIET. Last night he laughingly confessed he had imposed on me; and told me that he expected Sir William Thorpley, and his son and daughter, one of the most fashionable families of these very fashionable times. Did you ever hear of them, Charles?

MORRIS. The diurnal wits have frequently been merry at their expence: But pray go on.

JULIET. Sir William, I have heard, is a ridiculous old beau; Miss Thorpley an incomparable fine lady, and her brother young, handsome, light of heart, not inclined to either prudence or economy, and rendered rather too conspicuous by his fashionable propensities.

MORRIS.

## HAPPY AT LAST: OR

MORRIS. And this man—

JULIET. My father insists shall be my husband.

MORRIS. Insists!

JULIET. Till now I have been accustomed to guide him, and, tho' my parent, in most points as I directed he was pleased to move. But my influence is past, and, in spite of all arguments and entreaties, he has peremptorily declared, that if I reject the proposed husband, I may seek elsewhere for a father.

MORRIS. What! Does he make no allowance for either choice or dislike? Must you necessarily marry this man, even should you not be able to esteem, to love him.

JULIET. So my father says.

MORRIS. Brutality! (*with indignation.*)

JULIET. My dear Charles!

MORRIS. Take me from the rack of suspense—Quickly, quickly, Juliet, and tell me your intentions.

JULIET. My father's commands cannot be obeyed. I find it is more natural to resist, than to comply with them. He has threatened me harshly, should I prove disobedient; and if he forsake, who will protect me?

MORRIS. I!—With my life—Till the last moment of my existence.

JULIET. And till the last moment of mine, you shall have my affection and confidence. If my father abandon me, from that instant shall I regard you as my protector. We will suit our means to our fortune, and in some friendly and far distant cottage, we will invite, and endeavour to make our constant guests, Content and rural Happiness. My father, in time may forgive us.

MORRIS. Trust not to that—I have read the characters of mankind—Selfish, tyrannous, unfeeling beings!

JULIET. I do not think my father will be proved such; and I must tell you, Charles, that when we are

## SIGH NO MORE LADIES.

married, I shall not allow you to be so much of a cynic: You shall neither chide the sun for its spots, nor absolutely hate the world for its blemishes. You have your faults, and I must correct you. sir. (enter Peter.) Well, what brings you here?

PETER. Waunds, madam, measter be up and axing for you.

JULIET. Well, well; I'll be with him in a few minutes.

PETER Miss Juliet—

JULIET. What do you say?

PETER, I wish you good bye 'till I do see you again. [Exit.

JULIET. Farewell, my dear Morris! As soon as I have an opportunity of seeing you, I will dispatch my simple but truist messenger. Let Hope be your companion in my absence: Adieu.

MORRIS. Farewell! Farewell! (exit Juliet) What am I doing? Wrangling with the world, for its errors, yet acting with villainous duplicity. What! Deceive such innocence. I must not be a liar! I'll call her back—Explain every thing—And though it may disturb my happiness for eyer, I cannot—(calls.) Juliet! Juliet! She hears me not—the copse conceals her from my view—I am, as yet, more unfortunate than criminal; but if I proceed in my rashly form'd designs, the world will not abhor me, so much as I shall despise myself. [Exit.

---

### SCENE III.

An Apartment. Enter SIR. DAVID POPPLETON.

SIR DAVID.

“Man was not born for happiness,” says the Philosopher. Now I have liv'd fifty five years, without being able to discover whether that be a falsehood, or a truisim—But I am half inclined to *think* it is a lie. Does not my fortune enable me to possess what are

## HAPPY AT LAST: OR

called the good things of life? Isn't that happiness? Have I not the means of lessening the wants of those who are in necessity? Isn't that happiness? Did I not marry the worst temper'd woman in England, and loose her a few years after? Isn't that happiness? Have I not a daughter—Ah, plague on her stubborn—She is like her mother—No, dimme if she is—She's the finest, the handsomest girl in Europe—But then her obstinacy—She shall suffer for it—Suffer! What are you talking of, old David Poppleton? If I don't strive to make her happy, may I be miserable myself, as long as I live.

*Enter Mrs. FONDLY.*

Mrs. F. Well, brother, Well—

Sir. DAVID. Well, sister, well—

Mrs. F. The people of quality, I hear, are hourly expected; and as I should like to be introduced, when they first arrive, I have put on my best bib and tucker, as my poor, dear, old fashioned Mr. Fondly used to say.

Sir. DAVID. So I see: Sister, I can never doubt the existence of folly, when you are present. You grow a greater fool every day; and I can't help thinking, that a mob cap would become those sweet features, much better than all that discoloured trumpery.

Mrs. F. Brother—Sir David—You are no more fit to entertain people of rank, than to be master of the ceremonies at Bath: You have no idea of taste or fashion; your notions are as antique as your mansion, and as stupid as your rookery.

Sir DAVID. Yet they are bright enough to distinguish any noisy old crow, that comes into it. (*looking strongly at her.*) But as I have long granted a licence to your tongue, and am become well acquainted with your fooleries, you may prate as much as you please, and make your neighbours grin as much as you please. Tis a blessed thing that poor old Fondly is dead.

Mrs. F.

## SIGH NO MORE LADIES. 11

Mrs. F. It is indeed, brother! Peace to his ashes! As Geraldina Weepwillow says, in the last new novel.

Sir DAVID. The devil take Geraldina Weepwillow! And, I dare say, you would marry again? (*irony.*)

Mrs. F. If I could meet with one, who had youth, agreeableness, and the talents of pleasing a heart susceptible as mine.

Sir DAVID. Talents of pleasing! Why you senseless, grey old goose—

Mrs. F. What! Brother, this language—

Sir DAVID. If you don't like it, you know the way out of the house; and when I next wish to see you, I'll send for you.

Mrs. F. No, sir; barbarous as your notions and opinions are, I'll remain where I am, till the visitors arrive. And if you will not introduce me, why then, sir, I have a tongue in my head, and know my own name—That's all—I was in London, eight years ago, you know—lived three weeks in Grace-Church Street, and was at Lady Trundle's route, and the mansion house ball. I know the go, sir—I'm up to these things.

Sir DAVID. Yes, and if you were *up* to something else (*puts his hand to his neck*), it would be no great matter: But hold your tongue, do, you terrible old woman. I was a fool, to tell you any thing of my intentions. But here comes a comforter: Good morning, my dear little Juliet.

*Enter JULIET.*

JULIET. Good morning, my dear, dear Father!"

Sir DAVID. O, damn it! I forgot that I quarrel'd with her so desperately, last night. (*aside.*) Well, huffy, how are you disposed to treat me this morning?

JULIET. With that love and affection, which you have often said, made me one of the best of daughters.

Sir DAVID. And more inclin'd to the match I propos'd?

JULIET. No, sir, more averse: A thousand times more averse.

Mrs. F.

## HAPPY AT LAST; OR

Mrs. F. Averse to marriage! Childish and unnatural.

Sir DAVID. You shall marry the man I mentioned; I don't say to morrow, tho' I shall fix on an early day. In the course of a month, you shall be united to him.

JULIET. Sir, I cannot consent.

Mrs. F. O, child, but you must; you *shall*.

JULIET. Madam, I *will* not: And I must beg, may *insist*, that you will not be so peremptory.

Sir DAVID. That's right, my girl: teach her to know herself. But you must have him though: He is well born.

Mrs. F. Young.

Sir DAVID. Rich.

Mrs. F. Handsome.

Sir DAVID. Well made, fine health, the Adonis of St. James's.

Mrs. F. I wish he would have me! Heigho!

Sir DAVID. You!—Well, come—that's a good one. Only thiuk, you little rogue, how much you will be envied, when you are a woman of fashion.

Mrs. F. A beautiful coach, to take you to the opera—A curriple for the park—A private box at the theatre—lawn house for Faro—Country lodge 'or rural *fetes* and poetry. What would you have more?

JULIET. I'll answer you at some future time: Good morning, madam. [Exit.

Mrs. F. There—There's breeding! O, she is every inch a Poppleton—Brother, if you don't take great care, she'll plague you in your old age.

Sir DAVID. Yes, and by all the wrinkles of your skin, sister, she will only serve *me* as she has already served *you*. As I believe you to be one of the firmest old women in existence, so do I think her one of the wisest girls. She never plagued me in her life till now, and if she be a little disobedient, what's that to *you*?

Mrs. F. Oh, nothing, nothing: Yet let me tell you—

Sir DAVID.

## SIGH NO MORE LADIES. 13

Sir DAVID. Psha! I have heard already, every thing that your shallow brain will allow you to say, and I am not fond of repetitions. Besides I have a letter to write, to my lawyer, and I would, at any time, rather pay him thirteen and four pence, for half an hour's jargon; than listen to your confounded cackling. Ah, you silly old shepherdess. [Exit.

Mrs. F. Old shepherdess! To what brutalities is a tender, unprotected woman exposed! Ever since I configned the remains of poor Matthew Fondly to the cold, deep grave, have I been seeking for another, and more able protector. I am determined to have a young husband, and at the earliest opportunity too. If this intended marriage takes place, I shall, of course accompany the bride to London. And who knows, but after a little lounging in Bond Street, and a few visits among the fashionables, I may enslave some dear, delightful, heart-rending youth. I am told that women of my age and complexion, are now more regarded than the puny misses of the times. Should I meet with the swain my enraptured fancy pictures, I'll resign to him my six thousand pounds, and follow my true love thro' all the world. [Exit.

*End of Act I.*

## ACT II.



*SCENE. An Apartment.*

*Enter Sir DAVID POPPLETON.*

Sir DAVID.

I wish it was all over. I hate suspense: I can't live many years longer; but let my future hours be merry and happy as the past, and then the sexton may pelt me with clay, and the parson pocket his fees. Few will grieve for me; and so much the better—Juliet will go to my grave—How her dear bosom will rise—How her beautiful eyes will fill with tears—he will call on me—"He's gone!" She will say: "I shall never kiss his cheek again—Never more sit on his knee!" Curse it! This is worse than death—I love the baggage, more, a thousand times more than all my money, houses and lands, and yet she is so obstinate—so—

*Enter SERVANT.*

SERVANT. Sir William Thorpley, sir—

Sir DAVID. What! are they arrived?

SERVANT. Sir William is: And James is conducting him to this apartment.

*Enter Sir WILLIAM.*

Sir DAVID. What! My old friend! Welcome, you are most heartily welcome. Give me your hand: I am an old fashioned man, but upon my soul I am very glad to see you.

Sir WILLIAM. My dear, sir, the pleasure is mutual. Tis full fifteen years since we met, and, upon my honour, you scarcely look fifteen months older.

Sir DAVID. I heartily wish I could say the same in regard to your appearance. In truth neither of

## SIGH NO MORE LADIES. 15

us are young, Sir William, and if my legs are not quite so feeble, or my forehead so wrinkled, we must ascribe it to—

Sir WILLIAM. Feeble and wrinkled! What a barbarian. (*aside.*) To what, my good friend.

Sir DAVID. Why, to our different modes of living—You have been to India—I have staid at home—Then, when you came back, you lived so much in that damn'd nasty place called London, while I was breathing the pure air of the country. But your son and daughter, Sir William? Where are they pray?

Sir WILLIAM. They stopt at a village, six miles off, to look at a water-fall. Selina was seized with a poetical fit, and Harry doats on the beauties of nature, as well as of art.

Sir DAVID (*aside.*) A cold blooded young dog. Six miles from the finest girl in England, to—But, I suppose, we may expect them soon?

Sir WILLIAM. If the object be very grand, Selina will probably linger, till she can pen a sonnet. If common, I dare say, as their horses are of exquisite blood, the three tourists will be here in half an hour.

Sir DAVID. (*aside.*) A nonsenical old—three, Sir William? three did you say?

Sir WILLIAM. O, yes, I had forgot: Harry was rather unwilling to come, till his friend, Jack Ruffel, agreed to be one of the party. Jack is the best tempered lad in Europe, and he very good-humouredly said, “damme if I care where I am. Go on, my boy, and as the ghoit of Hamlet senior says, “I’ll follow thee.” Ha, ha, ha! How comic!

Sir DAVID. Ha, ha, ha! Jack is a pleasant fellow it seems? (*aside.*) Curse their impudence. A pleasant fellow, I say.

Sir WILLIAM. He is a man of fashion, and as entertaining as a man of fashion *can* be. I dare say we shall make a very lively party. We, who figure so much in the world of gaiety, are frequently astonished, at the horrid seclusion of country gentry.

Sir DAVID.

Sir DAVID. Yet some men of fashion figure so much, Sir William, that their seclusion is rather more horrid. The air of St. George's fields, and Fleet Market, is not quite so enlivening as that which braces our nerves, in this part of the world; and those who inhale it in small quantities, might not be disgusted with our more copious draughts, our fox-chases, and our jovial bowls.

Sir WILLIAM. What barbarous ideas does this old man entertain! *(aside.)* My dear Sir David, is Miss Poppleton in health?

Sir DAVID. She never had a day's illness, since she got all her teeth thro' her gums.

Sir WILLIAM. Never ill! Grots and abominable. *(half aside.)*

Sir DAVID. What did you say, my good friend?

Sir WILLIAM. That she was greatly to be envied: Lady Charlotte Whimper has been ill fourteen years, without knowing any thing of her complaint; and tho' Mrs. Meagerly has been under the necessity of changing her doctors, nearly fifty times, none of them could ever tell what ailed her.

Sir DAVID. With the Whimper's and Meagerly's we have no acquaintance, tho' our family has, at different times, intermarried with the Sturdies and Evergreens. Some of my ancestors have lived till four score and ten; told as many thousand merry tales, quaffed with their grandchildren, danced with their great-grandchildren, and died with more contentment, than some people enjoy, in the best part of their lives.

Sir WILLIAM. Dancing with—Ha, ha, ha! Well, that is so comic! There was rather a dearth of new ballets last season, and I'll drop a hint, some morning, at an opera rehearsal.

Sir DAVID. You frequent those places then, Sir William?

Sir WILLIAM. What, the Opera? How should I exist if I did not. What ravishment to hear the Italian *syrens*!

## SIGH NO MORE LADIES. 17

syrens—What enchantment to be smil'd upon, by the surrounding beauties! What thrilling transport to press the hand of the little divinity, who stands on her toes, till the discerning admirers of heaven-born genius, repay her with their abundant plaudits.

Sir DAVID. (*aside.*) If the son be half as great a fool as the father, I have choosen a charming husband for my girl. Well, Sir William, I believe in one of my letters to you, since your return from India, I told you I had a daughter, a fine girl, of a marriageable age, sweet tempered, and beloved by all who knew her.

Sir WILLIAM. True, and I afterwards informed you, that I had a son, whose person and accomplishments were regarded in the circles of fashion. You know, Sir David, that about fifteen years ago, my elegant habits of life, and Lady Sarah's previous infidelity, made my situation a *little*—that is *rather* unpleasant—I went to India, not on vulgar speculation, but to see my brother Frank, who had lived there a considerable time. I resided ten years with Frank—Poor fellow!—He died suddenly—with a glass of tokay in his hand—it *rather* affected me, to see him grasp the glass in his convulsions—but he left me a hundred thousand pounds, Sir David, (*smiling.*)

Sir DAVID. What! did he leave no family?

Sir WILLIAM. O, yes: Two sons and two daughters.

Sir DAVID. Zounds! He must have been immensely rich: A hundred thousand pounds to *you*, after providing for so many children!

Sir WILLIAM. Providing for *them* Sir David! Ha, ha! They had a black woman for their mother, and were illegitimate! But he left them a trifle; and I gave them something previous to my departure for England. And now, Sir David, what is your opinion of the alliance on which we have corresponded? Be ingenuous. What says your daughter?

Sir DAVID,

C.

Sir DAVID. Why then, to be ingenuous, Mr. Thorpeley was not very agreeable to come here, without his friend, Jack—Jack—What do you call him?

Sir WILLIAM. Jack Ruffel: Why no: Jack is such a merry dog, that those who know him must wish for his society.

Sir DAVID. And he stopt six miles off, to look at a water fall, and will probably stay till Miss Selina can compose a sonnet?

Sir WILLIAM. True: But they will soon be here: She has such a genius, and will write fourteen lines, in a less time, than you, or any country squire, could command your hobbling muse to say.

See the meadows, and see the green groves,  
Which Mary, our dairy-maid, loves

Sir DAVID. Ha, ha, ha! How facetious! A wrinkled old monkey (*aside.*) Well, sir, having said so much of your son, and his friend Jack, and, supposing that you will agree with me, when I affirm there should be no undue restraint, on the affections of an unvitiated heart; that love should be—

Sir WILLIAM. Free as the zephyrs, that fan the rose tree, as I told little Signora Celestina, when I cut our acquaintance, last July, in Suffolk Street—

Sir DAVID. Why, then, Sir William, *to be ingenuous*, my girl is much averse to the proposed union: But—

Sir WILLIAM. She has never seen my Harry: And I'll bet you a thousand pounds, as soon as she does see him, she will sigh like Eloisa, and be as mad as Sappho.

Sir DAVID. Indeed! He must be a fine fellow! Well, my old friend, if the young people are willing to form an attachment, may the blessing of Heaven attend them. But come, and take some refreshment in a cooler apartment, this is so confoundedly warm—

Sir WILLIAM. Nay, Sir David, you have been talking of love, and now we both feel the embers in our bosoms;

## SIGH NO MORE LADIES. 19

bosoms. I sincerely hope the young people will go distracted, as soon as they see each other—And then—  
Ha, ha, ha!

Sir DAVID. And what then?  
Sir. WILLIAM. To be a grandfather! Ha, ha, ha!  
It will be so—

Sir DAVID. So what?  
Sir WILLIAM. So very, very comic! Ha, ha, ha!  
[*Exit.*]

### SCENE II.

*The outside of MORRIS's cottage.*

*Enter MORRIS, followed by Mrs. WELWYN.*

Mrs. WELWYN.

Comfort, my dear brother, take comfort, I entreat you.

MORRIS. Vain, vain are your attempts to console me. If I lose my Juliet, the happiness of this world is resigned for ever.

Mrs. W. But if you obtain her, Charles?

MORRIS. Obtain her? How? By what means? The hopes I have formed, vanish like the beautiful clouds that lose their tints in the sky of summer: Gloom, melancholy gloom succeeds. Had I not enough of misfortune before, and must the consolation which I frantically dared to call my own, never reach this long tormented breast, of sorrow, and wretchedness?

Mrs. W. Sorrow first implanted by me! Wretchedness endured on my account.

MORRIS. Forbear!—I will not listen to your self-accusations: But how to act, I cannot determine. There's danger in remaining here—there's death—madness. I know not how to account for my presumption: but I have spent many a blissful hour,

20      HAPPY AT LAST; OR

in thinking that the charms of Juliet's person, the goodness of her heart, and the sweetnes of her temper, were to soothe the misfortunes, that have so heavily weighed on my health and spirits.

Mrs. W. I cannot—dare not attempt to console you.

MORRIS. It would avail nothing, if you did: I am but just rousing from the strange illusions, by which I have been guided. But the most material thing that remains to be done, is—

Mrs. W. Why do you pause, Charles?

MORRIS. 'Tis the suspension of a man in agony: To this cottage, in which I have lived—to these trees, under which we have talked of our misfortunes—to these hills and vallies, where I have, delighted, strayed with Juliet; I must instantly bid farewell—To Juliet, if my heart will suffer me, I must say, "Adieu, for ever!"

Mrs. W. Be not rash: There's no occasion for your immediate departure.

MORRIS. There is: We will begone to-morrow. When I think of the untruths I have told Sir David, my blood is heated by my own confusion. I have the affections of Juliet: But shall I decoy her from her father, break an old man's heart, and reduce her from affluence to poverty? No, no, I will leave you, dear Juliet, and may the guardian angels of innocence, be ever near you!

*Enter PETER.*

PETER. Well, here I be again, sir! Sir David desired me to come and invite you to dine with him to-day. The Baronet is arrived, and the young folk be expected at the hall, every minute. Läuk! what feasting and rare doings there will be.

MORRIS. Invite me to meet the man who is to tear my Juliet from me! This is not to be endured: Save me, kind Heaven, from distraction.

PETER. Sir! Läuk! You'll frighten me, if you roll your eyes about in that manner.

MORRIS.

## SIGH NO MORE LADIES. 21

MORRIS. Peace! Back to your master, and tell him, I despise his malicious—

MAS. W. Compose yourself; what are you saying?

MORRIS. I scarcely know: Tell Sir David—

PETER. I ben't deaf, sir: You may speak as softly as you please; and as I do think you be a little madish, I shall take it as a great favor, sir, if you won't come near me (*retreating*)

MORRIS. Fear nothing: Present my compliments to Sir David—

PETER. Aye, I can listen to any thing, that isn't in the belamitish fashion.

MORRIS. And tell him, I am prevented from dining with him to day. But I have something of consequence to say to him, and should be happy, if he would grant me a few minutes private conversation, in the evening.

[*Exeunt Morris and Mrs. Welwyn.*

PETER. I will, Sir: (*calling after Mrs. Welwyn.*) Give him a little hartshorn, ma'am; and wash his forehead with vinegar. Mother did so to I, when I cried at the false-heartednes of Nell Thickset. O, Gracious! Poor Gentleman! I'm afraid he be far gone, indeed.

[*Exit.*

### SCENE III.

*A Grove. Enter Trick.*

#### TRICK.

If ever I ride such a long, infernal journey again, may the pleasure of ambling up Piccadilly, and sporting my boot in Rotten Row, be eternally lost to me. Where can the hot blooded devil be run to? It was vastly civil of him, to lay me on a dry spot; and, since I am dismounted, without personal injury, I care not how long he amuses himself with his heels. To be thrown over a hedge, on an old woman's spinning wheel.

wheel. Ha, ha, ha! How comic! As old blue-skin says,

*Enter Mrs. FONDLY.*

Mrs. F. I shall reserve myself till the arrival of the young people, and not lavish my spirits and vivacity, in entertaining the old ones. (*seeing Trick.*) Heavens! What enchanting youth is this? If he is half as gallant as handsome—I'll try—I'll throw out one of those lures, which so often effect the designs of us pretty women—One of those little irresistible—

Pray, sir—

TRICK. Pray, madam; have you seen my horse?

Mrs. F. Your horse, sir?—You set my nerves in motion, like the strings of St. Cecilia's harp—No accident—Sure no accident.

TRICK. Split, madam; that's all—Alexander and Bucephalus—a full trot and a tumble—Look at my arm madam.

Mrs. F. Broke! I shall die, if it be broke!

TRICK. Oh no! Only bruised—severely bruised.

Mrs. F. Away with all ridiculous coyness! I am afraid you are very much hurt. How do you feel, sir?

TRICK. A little sore, madam—A little faint.

Mrs. F. Let me support you, sir—Lean on my sympathising bosom—How do you feel now, sir?—Heigho!

TRICK. A great deal better: Heigho!

Mrs. F. I thought so. The roses are returning to your cheek; the palpitation of your heart is less violent—And your eyes have a brightness—

TRICK. Which they have boldly stolen from your orbs—Your own, just now, were like hyacinths, adorned with the pearls of morning, when the clouds are grey, and the little herd boy goes to drive the cattle from the velvet meads, before the resplendent sun has boldly shewn his glittering face, to the green willows, that hang over the babbling brook.

Mrs. F. Sweet, poetical youth! Ye Gods! With

fuck

## SIGH 'NO' MORE LADIES. 23

such a man as this—*(aside.)* But your accident, sir—  
Pray let me hear.

TRICK. *(aside.)* I wonder who the devil she is: A diamond ring—I'll try to wheedle the liquorista old jade out of it. Why, ma'am, I have simply been thrown from the back of my horse; and may I perish, If I would not consent to be hurl'd from the top of St. Pauls, to the bottom of Ludgate Hill, If I were sure of falling at the feet of a woman, whose charms were equal to those, on which I now dare to fix the eye of admiration.

Mrs. F. I am overcome—This is too much, sir—  
Your arm—

TRICK. While you are present I can feel no pain—Let them bind me on the wheel, and tear me with red-hot pincers, still—still would I smile and, pointing to you, exclaim, “Yankees, I defy you! Ha, ha, ha! See, there's a goddess, that turns your malice to extacy and joy!” *(ranting extravagantly.)*

Mrs. F. I shall expire with rapture! He must be a man of fashion—But your horse, sir—

TRICK. Perish the brute, and let him speed to Chaos and eternal night!

Mrs. F. O, he must be a man of fashion—But, sir, the furious beast may kill some of the cottager's children.

TRICK. The world—the whole world must be sacrificed, before I can leave the first, best ornament of it. I see, in your face, a combination of the richest charms! Your cheeks are full blown roses—Your eyes resemble those of the wood pigeon; their brows are as delicate as the skin of a mouse—And your breath is—Excuse the freedom of a sudden, but irresistible passion *(kisses her—)* it is—

Mrs. F. What, sir? What, you free, insinuating, charming man!

TRICK. *(aside.)* As savoury as the steam of a ragout, from a coffee-house area—Sweet as a new opened pot of orange pomatum.

Mrs. F.

Mrs. F. O, you flatterer! You too eloquent seducer!

TRICK. And then this arm!—Place it before the Venus of antiquity, and it would be all fudge with her! These fingers! How long, delicate, and tapering—This is a very pretty ring—these charming fingers! (*kisses them*) A very pretty ring indeed!

Mrs. F. It was the first gift of my dear husband.

TRICK. What! You are married, then? O, as the man says in the play, would I were in my grave!

Mrs. F. Your grave! Heaven forbid! My husband, sir, has been in *his* grave some time, and I hope—

TRICK. Then I revive, and am myself again! I love you, madam—Fate may put a bar between us—I will tear myself away as fast as I can. But first take this: (*pulls out scissors and cuts a piece of his hair.*) Wear it for my sake, and give me, in exchange, one of those little curls, that sport upon your brow. Nay, I'll seize it, with my own, robber-like hands; I have it. (*cuts her hair.*) And I'll employ the next six months, in writing a new Rape of the Lock.

Mrs. F. (*aside.*) I really believe he has cut the silk of my new wig.

TRICK. And now, farewell for ever!

Mrs. F. O, no! Do not let us part!

TRICK. The pale-fac'd destinies *will* have it so! Take this little hoop of gold. (*pulls a ring from his finger.*) And when I am far away, drop a tear on it, and give a melancholy thought to me.

Mrs. F. And take you this. (*gives him her ring.*) And every night, when you place your head on your pillow—I can say no more—My emotions overpower me—

TRICK. (*aside.*) Ha, ha! And so do mine: Much good may the ring do you. Adieu.

Mrs. F. So soon! Where—Where are you going?

TRICK. To Sir David Poppleton's, to prepare for the reception of my master, Mr. Thorpley, who will be there in less than half an hour.

Mrs. F.

## SIGH NO MORE LADIES.

Mrs. F. What! Your master! Support me, Heaven! And have I debased myself, in talking so long, and in such a manner, to a footman! I shall go into fits! Give me my ring again!

TRICK. Take it—No—I can't part with it—I must, I feel I must look at it, when I place my head on my pillow.

Mrs. F. I insist on having my ring back again—A footman, indeed, to presume—

TRICK. *(with affected and extravagant dignity.)* Forbear, madam! The opinion I have entertained of you, would have honor'd a princess; your allusion to my situation in life, cuts my soul in two, and fills my eyes with cowardly tears. Did not particular reasons induce Alfred the Great, to put on the disguise of a peasant? Look at me once more, madam! Can you see nothing above the vulgar in me! Circumstances, the most unhappy, have obliged me to seem what I am not—My family is noble—My fortune not contemptible—And my heart—O, you unkind one! You have stuck in it a long and desperate dagger, and now I fly to pull it out as fast as I can! *[Exit.]*

Mrs. F. Come back, thou treasure of my soul! *(Enter Peter.)* Come hither! *(without looking at him.)* My heart is the repository of love! I will not trust my eyes to dwell on your too perfect form; but the honey of my lips shall again hang on yours! *(She advances affectedly, looks on the ground, throws her arms round Peter's neck and kisses him.)* Oh!

PETER. Oh, the dickens! What be you at? It won't do, Mrs. Fondly; I'll be burn't if I would commit fornication with you for five shillings.

Mrs. F. I'm ruined! I'm ruined! You ugly, broad-faced imp of mischief! Then you have overheard every thing that—

PETER. Ees; every thing that—Dear heart! I always thought you were desperately in want of a young husband; and every body said the black trumpeter, that was quartered at the Bull's Head—

Mrs. F. Hold your tongue, you shameful villain.

PETER.

## HAPPY AT LAST: OR

PETER. Come, come, Mrs. Fondly; more respect, fuller words if you please! I'se an honest Lad, and I won't put up with no abuse.

Mrs. F. Well, well; there's half a guinea for you: Ha, ha, ha! It was pleasant enough that you should overhear us. But it was only a joke, Peter.

PETER. Ha, ha, ha! (*looking at the money and chuckling.*)

Mrs. F. Why, what do you laugh at?

PETER. Only a joke—only a joke, Mrs. Fondly.

Mrs. F. But you'll be cautious, and not mention the circumstance?

PETER. O, I won't ma'am, only to one or two of my acquaintances. I always tells all my secrets to Betty Todkins, because, d'ye see, Betty and I are one day—You understand—We always knows one another's affairs: When I first went a courting to her, says she to I, "Peter, if ever you conceal any thing from me"—

Mrs. F. I'll have you hang'd, you impudent villain!

PETER. Hang'd! Ha, ha! Well come—that would be funny enough! Good bye, ma'am, good bye.

Mrs. F. Why, where are you going?

PETER. To make my last dying speech and confession, while you be getting a rope for my neck. Good bye, ma'am, good bye. [*Exit.*]

Mrs. F. Between love and brutality how am I tormented—The delicacy of my constitution will never support it, and I shall fall a tender, unresisting sacrifice! I shall be like a beautiful lamb bound, to the altar of the gods, with wreaths of roses! How true are the harmonious lines of my last sonnet!

To what can I compare a lovely maid,  
Who loves, and fears,—who trembles,—is afraid?

Why to a lilly, cut up by a gardener's spade—

For here she, pensive, roves, and there will go,

And drop her tears, and sob, and cry Heigho!

*Enter Peter, and repeats in the same tune,*

Aye, and I have heard old widows will do so.

*He runs off, and she follows him, in a passion.*

*End of Act II.*

## SIGH NO MORE LADIES. 27

### ACT III.

*SCENE a room in Sir DAVID's house.*

*Enter JULIET.*

JULIET.

THE hour of trial is arrived. I have loved my father; I have obeyed him; he has rewarded me, till now, with his daily smiles, and nightly blessings. Poor Morris! Must I then renounce—(*a laugh without.*) They are coming to this apartment; and by flying from them, I shall only add to my perplexity, and make myself a more conspicuous object for their ridicule.

*Enter Sir WILLIAM, Miss THORPLEY, HARRY, RUSSEL, and Mrs. FONDLY.*

Sir. WILLIAM. (*speaking as he enters.*) No apologies, my dear Sir David; we will endeavour to amuse ourselves till your return. Well, here we are again, Miss Poppleton! It was unkind of you to leave us for a moment; and nothing could compensate for the loss of your charming society, but the velocity of Sir David's wit, and the lively vivacity of Mrs. Fondly.

Mrs. F. O. Sir William, this is indeed an honor! (*Curtsies.*)

HARRY. Jack, if I marry the spinster, you shall take the widow. (*aside.*)

RUSSEL. "An ounce of civet, good apothecary!" But say something to her, or she will think you a very cold lover. (*apart.*)

HARRY. Upon my honour, Miss Poppleton, the relish I had for the scenes of nature, when a boy, is revived, as I cast my eyes around this charming intermixture of hill and dale. Truly Arcadian! A few piping shepherds, and half a score of wood-nymphs,

to weave chaplets for them, would render it delectable.  
Mrs. F. O, I always lov'd the shepherds and their pipes!

JULIET. I am happy, sir, that you are pleas'd with our retirement. But to those who have lived so much in the gay world, our rusticity must be obvious. What we want in refinement, we must make up in sincerity; and if our manners and language have not the polish which you have been accustomed to, do us the justice to believe, that we rarely commit an action with an ill design, or speak in opposition to the dictates of reason and humanity.

HARRY. Jack, there is something in this girl, that—  
(*apart.*)

RUSSEL. She is a devilish deal too good, for such a worthless fellow as you. (*apart.*)

HARRY. Without flattery, madam, I have seldom discovered so much modesty, blended with so much beauty. My dear Selina, I am sure you must be happy, in gaining so amiable a friend.

Miss THORPEL. Very—Very happy, Harry! But, to tell you my mind, Miss Poppleton, I shall be less fond of your society, if I find you of a sombre cast. I love to see Mirth break the fetters of Melancholy, and scatter thousands of roses, in the paths which are so lightly prest by her magic feet. Now I fear you are rather too fond of the myrtle shade—Isn't she, Mrs. Fondly?

Mrs. F. Her sympathies are ill directed: She has not that quickness, that charming vivacity which, tho' antiquated prudes may censure it, makes us appear to the other sex, as the bard of Avon has it, "The high top-gallant of their joy!"

Miss THORPEL. Very agreeably expressed, indeed!  
(*apart to Russel.*)

RUSSEL. And very elegantly quoted!

Sir WILLIAM. (*apart to Harry.*) Ha, ha, ha! This old lady is extremely comic!

Miss THORPEL. But I shall allow no solitude, no dejection,

## SIGH NO MORE LADIES. 29

dejection, while I am here. It's as bad as being at a benefit tragedy, when the good lady before the lamps, thinks it a duty to entertain her auditors, by making them as miserable as she possibly can. Now, at dinner, you once gave such a look—just so—and then you heav'd *such* a sigh!—

JULIET. Did I?—It was rude, I confess. But the mind is a strange composition, and a thought might—

Miss THORPELBY. My dear girl! Thinking has been out of fashion a long time indeed: Hasn't it Russel?

RUSSEL. O, yes: It went soon after the lac'd stomachers and long ruffels. It is now confined to the dry plodders of the Temple, and Lincoln's Inn: creatures never pleasant to only such—

HARRY. As want a marriage settlement, an annuity, or divorce.

RUSSEL. To be sure there is a little of it still observed in Lombard Street; but the inhabitants of that quarter, you know, are only respected when—

Sir WILLIAM. The necessities of those in *other* quarters are very pressing, and the creditor curs can no longer be restrained from biting. Indeed I have seen some symptoms of it, in a few Piccadilly old maids, and Mary-le-bone widows—

Mrs. F. Ridiculous beings, with neither souls, nor energy! Tasteless of pleasure, and incapable of bestowing it.

Miss THORPELBY. It certainly has long since had its run; but it *may* come in again. I took Lady Tranquil in my carriage, to the last Vauxhall *fête*; and as we were bowling along the road, we saw a tremendous fire, which the mob said had broken out in the King's Bench—Her Ladyship was the spirit of our party.

Sir WILLIAM. She certainly was infinitely agreeable. The flashes of her wit—

Miss THORPELBY. Exceeded the number of the lamps: and it was three o'clock in the afternoon of the following day, when a milliner from Bond Street, impertinently

from morning till night—I would sonner—

HARRY. I know you are capable of playing the fool, and you and Selina will make a charming couple. I repeat, there is only one woman in the world I can ever marry—Is she in the world? Oh, Jack! I shudder every time I put that question to myself. I tremble, and confess myself a villain!

RUSSEL. Desist, desist, you felt-tormenting devil! Ha, ha, ha! A fellow who, for the last four years, has pursued every pleasure, and entered into every dissipation, now comes with a face as grave as a lawyer at the bar, and with a voice sweetly attuned to tabernacle psalmody, exclaims, “Oh, I confess myself a villain!” Ha, ha, ha!

HARRY. Go on, go on. Infants thrive on pap, and fools on laughter. Let me have my humour for half an hour, and I shall become a very jester. Yes—I have been idle, dissipated—and I feel I shall soon be so again. But, Jack, I must reform: I must indeed—I lost two thousand pounds last tuesday, and three more on the following night. But my father must not know of this.

RUSSEL. You unlucky rogue! Do, my dear fellow, renounce the dice box.

HARRY. I will, Jack, I positively will. But when a man is unhappy, my boy, the bottle and dice—To be sure neither philosophers, nor moralists countenance the practice; but then, you know, I seldom read grave looks, and am never fortunate enough to meet with grave society.

RUSSEL. I'll forswear *your* society, unless you leave off gaming.

HARRY. Damn it! Have I not told you I mean to do so. Sir, I sallied forth, from the gaming house, half mad with the remembrance of my follies, and half drunk with the Burgundy I had swallowed. A Girl in the streets asked me for money, and I offered to see her home. She had *no* home: She only wanted a trifle to carry her back to her father's cottage in

Hampshire.

## SIGH NO MORE LADIES. 33

Hampshire. My life on it she was a pepitent. I gave her my last guinea; and she thanked me on her knees. She left me, and I said to myself, three thousand pounds will not satisfy the rapacity of a gambler, but one poor guinea, may heal the wounds of an aged heart, and save a miserable soul from predition.

Roszel. Faith, Harry, you were very sentimental in your cups.

Harry. On that night too, I scamper'd thro' the park: The moon shone at intervals—The wind blew—The trees made a melancholy noise—I stop'd the rash arm of Suicide, and led the astonished wretch to a tavern. Poverty and insult had driven him to the brink of predition—We are brutes, Jack: Upon my soul we are. But I'll reform; if I don't, may—Come with me into the garden, and I'll talk farther of my intentions, and tell you what I mean to say to my father and Sir David. *[Exeunt.]*

### SCENE II.

*Another Apartment, Enter Sir DAVID.*

Sir DAVID.

I wonder Morris has not been here yet: What can the young scoundrel have to say to me? I have, for several weeks, entertained a suspicion, that he is in love with my girl, and something more than a suspicion, that she thinks him a proper fellow for her husband. I don't know enough of him for that however. He is a handsome dog, sensible, and well bred. But then, damn it, his fortune is so small, and the negotiation I have entered into—Here, Peter.

*Enter PETER.*

Peter. Did your honor call?

Sir DAVID.

E

Sir DAVID. Have you seen any thing of Mr. Morris, since I sent you, to invite him to dinner?

PETER. Yes, Sir David, I see'd him in the grove, about an hour ago. Mercy on me! He look'd as grim as the ghost of Betty Huggins, that sits all night in the cow house, where she hung herself. He fix'd his eyes on the ground, sir; cross'd his arms, and walk'd about, as I do now: Just such a true lover like figure as I seem at this moment. Mercy on us! What a power of kind things there have been said, by him and Miss Juliet, at old Molly Buttermead's.

Sir DAVID. What! Did they meet there?

PETER. Aye, many a good hundred times: Molly has often cried, to see the young ones take on; and I us'd to tell them when you were out of the way.

Sir DAVID. So old Molly cried, and you told them when I was out of the way? Ha, ha, ha!

PETER. Ees, sir, I likes to be koind to my fellow creatures.

Sir DAVID. I'll send the old witch to Bridewell, and set you in the stocks, for a whole month, you dog. Out of my sight, you rascal, or I shall break your head. (*exit Peter.*) So, so! Things have gone farther than I suspected, and perhaps—No, no, not so bad as that, neither. A man that talks like Morris, can never be a villain; and my girl is too virtuous, to commit an action, that would sanction the scorn of society. Here he comes. I'll not give way to passion, but endeavour to play the hypocrite as well as himself.

*Enter MORRIS.*

MORRIS. Sir Dayid, I hope I do not break in upon any engagement. The message I sent to you, has probably kept you at home.

Sir DAVID. Not at all: But why did you not come to dinner? The Thorpleys are arrived, and I wish to introduce you to the young people, Lads of sport, and a fine dashing girl, I assure you. I see, by your eye,

## SIGH NO MORE LADIES. 35

eye, you have no aversion to the girls: I'll step and call them to you.

MORRIS. By no means: It is an honor I must decline.

Sir DAVID. Pshaw! Nonsense! You must positively be acquainted with them; so I'll go and—

MORRIS. Hold, Sir David; I can not, at present, consent to be made known to them.

Sir DAVID. Well, sir, just as you please: But, perhaps, you will dine with us, on the wedding day? If you *then* decline my invitation, you must be a four fellow indeed.

MORRIS. The wedding day, sir.

Sir DAVID. Yes: I suppose you have heard of the intended alliance, between young Thorpley and Juliet—A devilish fine match! You have heard—Haven't you?

MORRIS. I have, sir—Slightly—A report has—

Sir DAVID. What are you talking about? What do you wish to say?

MORRIS. More, Sir David, than I am capable of uttering. But are you fix'd, positively determined on this union?

Sir DAVID. Positively, sir: It will produce the most agreeable consequences, between the two families; and on the fifth of next month, my little Juliet will be a blushing, happy bride. I tell you what, Morris—I'm an old fashioned man, and will have the ceremony perform'd in the old fashioned manner. No tacking together; in a little square parlour. No! We'll all go to church. You shall be of the party—Shake hands with the bridegroom—Kiss the bride—Give us all joy—See the roasted oxen fairly cut up—Get drunk after dinner—And dance with the lads and lasses on the green, in the cool of the evening. Zounds! We will all be as merry as—

MORRIS. (*sinking on a chair, extremely agitated.*) Then she is lost, and I know my fate. Misery—Eternal Misery!

Sir DAVID. What the devil ails you? and what are you muttering?

MORRIS. Sir David, I beg your pardon: I shall not witness the ceremony: I intend to leave this part of the country, to-morrow; and, from this hour, it is not probable that we shall ever meet again.

Sir DAVID. Going! So soon! Why, you young dog, what do you mean by all this?

MORRIS. I wish to tell you, but have not sufficient resolution. I now appear before you, in extreme confusion, and feel a degree of pain and humility not to be described. I owe you a small sum, which you advanced to me sometime since, and cannot—

Sir DAVID. O, in two months—Leave it to your steward—Your note—Or an order on your banker—

MORRIS. For Heaven's sake, do not torment me thus! I have no steward—no banker—I am—O, shame, shame!—A liar and impostor!

Sir DAVID. A mighty pretty confession indeed, and a great deal of novelty in it! Will you be pleased to unravel a little more, and give a further explanation of your own qualities.

MORRIS. I am come to you, sir, for that very purpose. I can offer nothing satisfactory, in extenuation of some parts of my conduct; but if you will hear my story—

Sir DAVID. Pray go on, sir—Something devilish odd in all this. (*aside.*)

MORRIS. Sir David, my father was a man of family and fortune, but he was dissipated and extravagant; and when I attained the age of eighteen, I found myself in the most unpleasant circumstances. My father died, and his creditors were scarcely to be appeased, by the wreck of his property. About a hundred pounds a year now remained, for the support of me and my sister. I had formed bright expectations, but—I was cruelly deceived! (*sighs.*)

Sir DAVID. Why this was rather an unlucky blow. But your relations—

MORRIS.

## SIGH NO MORE LADIES. 37

MORRIS. My father had a rich sister—She hated him and his children, because he had married a beautiful Italian, who died in giving birth to my sister. Thus deserted, we retired into the country, and continued there two years, when I proposed to go, for a short time, to Italy.

Sir DAVID. To Italy! A hundred pounds a year, and—

MORRIS. Your surprise is natural: The traveller of fortune would smile at our adventures and economy, but we effected our design; established ourselves in a delightful village; and it was there we nurs'd that enthusiasm, which sometimes leads, by paths of the brightest flowers, to inevitable destruction. But I tire you—

Sir DAVID. O, no, no—Go on, sir.

MORRIS. I resolved to see as much of the country as I could: And when my sister was settled in her cottage, I left her, and was absent six months. My mother's relations were all dead: I walked over the most delightful scenes, and my pencil and imagination were continually employed. I returned to my sister, and flew to embrace her. She was pale, terrified, and almost insane. I ask'd a thousand times, the cause of her behaviour, and at length, she confess'd that, an English gentleman had appeared, during my absence, and succeeded in—My face burns with confusion.

Sir DAVID. Finish your story, young man.

MORRIS. The name of her seducer—her villainous seducer!—was Belford. I curst him, in my rage; I even curst my sister; but I afterwards took her to my heart, and swore to love her still. Belford had confess'd the most sincere love, and promis'd immediate marriage. I sought him out, and, after taxing him with his crimes, desired him instantly to fulfil his vow. He would not—I'ho' he confess'd his arts, and protested she had fallen by them, he would not do her the justice I required. You are

a father, sir: The feelings of mankind, tho' not always the same, are very relative. What would you have said, to the man who so abus'd your daughter?

Sir DAVID. What would I have said?—Nothing.

MORRIS. Nothing!—Then I have mistaken your character—Nothing!

Sir DAVID. No: I think, Heaven forgive me, I should have extracted his brains, without speaking a single word. Pray what did *you* do?

MORRIS. Repeated my curses—Gave him his choice of pistols—Received his fire—And—Oh horror!—Shot him dead, on the spot!

Sir DAVID. The devil you did! And what then?

MORRIS. Then I hurried away, with my sister, and escaped the justice which pursued me so closely. We arrived in England; changed our names, and experienced many vicissitudes—My poor, heart-broken sister suffered much. We afterwards fixed on this spot. Chance made me known to you; and, with the deepest confusion, I must repeat, that I have deviated from truth and honor.

Sir DAVID. All this is very strange! But have you nothing else to say?

MORRIS. Yes: I love your daughter!—Nay start not sir—I am poor—an alien to society—But affection will glow in the breast of poverty, and exist in the loneliness of a wilderness—But let me conjure you to regard your daughter's happiness: I shall never see her again—Be kind, be tender to her; and if she speaks of me with affection, do not despise her for it.

Sir DAVID. Have you any thing more to say?

MORRIS. But little—By this alone, can I repay the pecuniary debt I owe you. (*gives paper.*) But if you continue to love and cherish your daughter, the prayers of a wretched man shall attend you, from the earliest hour of morn, till the latest of each melancholy night. [Exit hastily.]

Sir DAVID. What the devil have we got here?—Eh! How! An assigment of his furniture—And

• £20 note—The dog is honest, however—But then, such impudence to love my daughter! Yet how could he help it? For she is certainly the most charming girl, within fifty miles. I'll have him hang'd for his audacity—What a handsome rascal he is! I'm in such a passion, I don't know what to do to him—Egad, I'll return this paper, and send him a hundred pounds, to take him on his journey. [Exit.]

SCENE III.

A Grove. Enter JULIET.

JULIET.

To whom shall I tell the sorrows of my heart?  
The fairy visions of youth are no longer seen, and  
all my anticipations are gloomy and distressing.

Enter MORRIS hastily.

MORRIS. Juliet! My beloved, lost Juliet! I have seen Sir David: I have disclosed to him—

JULIET. I was in the adjoining room, and overheard every word that passed. Your story filled me with horror; and after you left my father, my trembling feet would scarcely bear me to this spot.

MORRIS. Till this moment, I never knew how much I loved you:—But I must be gone—Think of my miserable fortune—My shameful impositions—And learn, like the rest of the world, to shun and despise me. (going.)

JULIET. We will not part—Indeed we will not. (detaining him.)

MORRIS. We must: I will pursue the path of villainy no further. Farewell!

JULIET. Why, then,—farewell! (faints in his arms.)

MORRIS. I shall go distracted! Had I avoided this meeting, it would have saved me a thousand pangs—She looks as if death were in her face—Juliet! Juliet.

JULIET.

40      MAPPY AT LAST: or

JULIET. (*recovering.*) Where am I? and with whom? Morris! Morris!

MORRIS. Here, here, my love!

JULIET. I thought you had left me for ever.

SIR DAVID, (*without.*) Juliet.

JULIET. Hark! my father calls me.

MORRIS. Then leave me: fly from me, I conjure you.

SIR DAVID. (*without.*) Why Juliet! Juliet Poppleton.

MORRIS. Begone, I entreat you; A father's curse is dreadful! Be dutiful, and avoid it.

JULIET. I know the sufferings of your mind, and will not leave you, till you have promised—

MORRIS. What?

JULIET. Not to quit the village, till you either see, or hear from me again.

MORRIS. I will not: I protest I will not.

JULIET. Then there is, at least, one more joy deserved for me: May Heaven bless you, Morris, and heal the sorrows of your heart.

MORRIS. And may its gentlest angels hover over, and guard you, my kind, my tender Juliet. [*Exeunt.*]

*End of Act III.*

## SIGH NO MORE LADIES. 41

### ACT IV.



*SCENE a Grove.*

*Enter Trick.*

*Trick.*

**F**ORTUNE a baggage—A jilt—A harlot! 'Tis false, ye melancholy croakers of society—She is a goddess, of most bewitching aspect; and tho' her bandage conceal half her charms, the smile that parts her honied lips, is enough to fill the heart with rapture—And now for my assignation with Mrs. Fondly; O, here she comes!—No!—'I's my master—So, bide me for a while, ye gentle haunts of my enamoured Sylvia. (*retires behind the trees.*)

*Enter Russel, and Harry Thorpley, hastily.*

**R**USSEL. Come, come, Master Harry, I'll have no foul play: The little rustic's glance was directed to me—

**H**ARRY. No such thing—I was the object they pointed to; and I saw an invitation, in her rosy mouth, which a hermit could not have declined. A pretty fellow indeed you are, to make love to Selina, and run, like a rein-deer, after the first pink petticoat you see in the village.

**R**USSEL. Ha, ha, ha! Yes, and a pretty fellow *you* are, to make love to Sir David's daughter, and impudently dispute my claim, to the milk-maid of one of his tenants.

**H**ARRY. Why, Jack, when there is a scarcity of articles—

**R**USSEL. It is very natural to be an early customer, and secure a decent quantity for our own wants—So, say no more about it, my lad; for I'm off, and damme if you shall overtake me. [*Exit hastily.*

F

**H**ARRY.

HARRY. And damme if I don't try for it (*runs after him.*)

TRICK comes forward.

TRICK. There they go! And two cleverer fellows never sent a billet doux, or grafted the insignia of cuckoldom, on the forehead of a mawkish husband.

Mrs. FONDLY sings without.

"My heart's my own, my will is free,  
And so shall be my voice."

TRICK. Ha, ha! Here comes my blooming fair one! and if I don't succeed, in making her change her tune at last, my old profession of acting before short fixes and the little purple-nos'd fiddler was of no use to me.

Enter Mrs. FONDLY.

Mrs. F. I almost sink with confusion!

TRICK. So do I.

Mrs. F. To meet you here, and alone, is so rash, so imprudent.

TRICK. When I abuse your love and confidence, may I become the scorn of those exquisite eyes, and the detestation of that swan-like bosom.

Mrs. F. Swan-like bosom! How eloquent is love! What things it leads us to speak of! What emotions it teaches us to feel! See, here; behold this lock,—I have shed tears over it; but they were tears of joy—Where is mine?

TRICK. Curse me if I know. (*aside.*) I have it not about me.

Mrs. F. Not about you! Sir, is this constancy? I fear I have mistaken you. If you really loved me—

TRICK. If I loved you! Reflect on what all the heroes of ancient and modern times have said to their mistresses, and think what I would say, if this swelling heart would let me.

Mrs. F. But the lock of hair—The lock of hair!

TRICK.

## SIGH NO MORE LADIES. 43

TRICK. Damme, I suppose she thinks she is acting Othello! By my soul, old lady, I'll soon shew you a lock of hair, if the old black cow I see in the next field, will suffer me to twitch her tail (*aside.*) Ha, ha, ha! What do you think I have done?

Mrs. F. I can't gues, indeed.

TRICK. I have hid the little treasure, under a tuft of violets, in the adjoining meadow. It was a poetical idea that led me to do so; and I will shew you, tomorrow, what my muse said on the occasion. But let me go and—

Mrs. F. No, stay! Your conversation enchantas me! Tell me who you are—the name of your family—and—

TRICK. Ah! Death and madnes! Fire and fury!

Mrs. F. Bless me! What do you mean?

TRICK. Pain, torture and distraction. (*walks about.*)

Mrs. You terrify me.

TRICK. Damnation!

Mrs. F. Oh, horrid! You make my gentle blood recoil.

TRICK. Ghosts of my ancestors! Look down, and calm this perturbation—But I'll tell you all; and do not despise me, thou emblem of softness.

Mrs. F. Go on, thou paragon of manly counlines.

TRICK. I am Sir Frederick Arundel—

Mrs. F. What? Who?

TRICK. Sir Frederick Arundal of Glamorganshire: Did you never hear the story of an unhappy Baronet of that name.

Mrs. F. Never.

TRICK. Then I will reveal it. Can you excuse the indiscretions of gallantry? Can you turn an eye of comiseration on a man, whose ardent love for your sex, has been his ruin.

Mrs. F. I can—I can. (*wipes her eyes.*)

TRICK. On the twenty fourth of last January, I was at a masquerade. At the supper table, and on my right hand, I beheld a Crazy Jane, eating a

beef sandwich, and drinking a glass of Maderia.. She was beautiful; and her face so much resembled yours, that while I thus fondly gaze—

Mrs. F. O, happy, happy Jane! Proceed, Sir Frederick.

TRICK. She was accompanied by a little bandy-legged gentleman, in the character of Mercury—I followed her close—told her my name, and gave her my picture. But in the course of two hours, I lost her in the crowd—I now abandoned myself to despair—

Mrs. F. Poor, susceptible youth!

TRICK. Some few nights afterwards, I was going thro' Cavendish square; and I stop'd to listen to the melodious warblings of some unfeen angel. A lamp-lighter was then taking his second round, and I gave him half a guinea, to let me mount his ladder—I ascended to the first floor window, and saw—

Mrs. F. What? Who?

TRICK. My divine Crazy Jane! She was sitting on a pink silk sofa, and attired in a transparent muslin night dress—She had a little black kitten on her right knee; a tame pigeon on her left shoulder; and while she touched her lute, she sang, (*sings ridiculously.*)

Go, my pretty, coo—coo dove,

And tell Sir Frederick how I love !

Mrs. F. How heavenly! What followed, Sir Frederick?

TRICK. I threw another half guinea, into the hat of the fishy-smelling genius of intrigue—Gently entered at the window—Appeased her alarm, with a thousand kisses—played a few minutes with her kitten, and then—She could not resist me.

Mrs. F. Who could resist you!

TRICK. In a short time, Lord Webfoot, her husband, detected the amour, and brought his action against me—in vain my lawyer pleaded—in vain he spoke of my general character—of the agreeableness of my person

## SIGH NO MORE LADIES. 45

person—Verdict Twenty thousand pounds! I was obliged to hide myself immediately; and on the Saturday night following, the blooming partner of my joys killed herself, with two pennyworth of white arsenic, bought at No. 478, Oxford Street. These tears!—Oh!—Excuse me.

Mrs. F. I never heard so moving a tale! Fair Rosamond and Woodstock Bower is not half so shocking.

TRICK. I had a villainous steward, who just at that time, robbed me of five thousand pounds; and in the same month, my noble mansion in the country was reduced to ashes. Mr. Thorpley had been the companion of all my gay hours; and yet now, to avoid discovery, I submit to be called his servant. He is my friend, my very sincere friend—

Mrs. F. Yet I heard him say to you, not an hour ago, “Curse you, you rascal, why did you not write to the taylor, as I ordered you.”—

TRICK. Yes, yes—He is obliged to say those things, now and then, to carry on the mystery. But when we are alone, he often exclaims, “By heaven, my dear Sir Frederick, I love you too well, to see you thus degraded. Fly to Germany, and marry the lovely Countess of Krumpenhousendorff.”

Mrs. F. O, pray don't take any such advice.

TRICK. Since I have seen *you* I certainly cannot. I have only two wishes: The one is, to compromise the business I have mentioned, with Lord Webfoot—

Mrs. F. And the other?

TRICK. To have the possession of your hand and heart! To make you *Lady Arundel*, and shew you, as a rich jewel of love's mysterious cabinet, in the fashionable circles to which I pant to return.

Mrs. F. By the glances of Cupid's eye, I vow it shall be so.

TRICK. The devil it shall! (*aside.*)

Mrs. F. Yes, I will be the balm of your sorrows. But in case the marriage should not take place.

TRICK.

46      HAPPY AT LAST; OR

TRICK. What should prevent it, my angel? Surely you—

Mrs. F. Oh, doubt me not! Yes, Hymen shall tie the rosy band, and then, love, we will take a trip.

TRICK. I hope it will be a trip down stairs, that will break your old yellow neck. (*aside.*)

Mrs. F. Ha, ha, ha! I think I should like to go to Germany, if it were only to mortify the pert Countess. But any place with you must be paradise.

“I would love you all the day,  
Ev’ry night would kiss and play,  
If with me you’d fondly stray  
Over the hills and far away.”

[*Exit.*]

TRICK. If I get any of your cash, I will soon be far away; but curse me if you shall long be the companion of my tour. Ha, ha, ha! The German Countess came in very *apropos*, and may I be struck out of the Court Calendar, if a cleverer Baronet than Sir Frederick Arundel has been created since the 15th century.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II.

*The inside of MOLLY BUTTERMEAD’s cottage.*

*Enter Sir DAVID POPPLETON.*

Sir DAVID. Why Molly! Dame Buttermead! Where the devil are you! By the Lord Harry I’ll give the old hussy such a lecture! (*enter Molly.*) O, you are here, are you?

MOLLY. Bless my heart! What, Sir David Poppleton! This is such an honor—

Sir. DAVID. Yes, yes; you’ll find out the honor, in a few minutes.

MOLLY. But pray sit down, Sir David: Here’s a chair.

Sir DAVID. No, no; I shall stand if you please, Mrs. Molly; for I assure you this is not a visit of ceremony.

MOLLY.

## SIGH NO MORE LADIES. 47

MOLLY. Ah, your honor was always frank and free;  
and every body in the village knows that you are  
one of the best tempered men that ever—

SIR DAVID. Silence, you old devil, or I shall be  
tempted to knock you down with my cane! (walks  
about in a great passion.)

MOLLY. Old devil, and knock me down! O, your  
honor is joking.

SIR DAVID. Look in my face, Mother Buttermead—  
Look, I say—Do you see any thing like a joke there?

MOLLY. Joke! No, indeed: Why tis as black as  
my blind folly's. What can be the matter?

SIR DAVID. O, I'll soon tell you what's the matter—  
Do you know the meaning of the word gratitude?

MOLLY. Why, was not our parson's last sermon  
all about it, and do I ever fail going to church on  
sundays?

SIR DAVID. Church, you abominable old hypocrite!  
How long have you lived in this cottage?

MOLLY. Five and thirty years, come next Lady day.

SIR DAVID. To whom have you paid your rent?

MOLLY. You are my landlord, and would never  
take any.

SIR DAVID. Tell me who you have to thank, for  
supporting old Dick Buttermead, for the last five  
years of his life?

MOLLY. To thank! Nobody.

SIR DAVID. O, curse your gratitude! Perhaps you  
are a little more obliged, at this moment, to the  
person who procured your son Jack's discharge from  
the army?

MOLLY. Perhaps *not*.

SIR DAVID. Why, you impudent—Surely you have  
been tippling—

MOLLY. May be so: I *have* lived in the cottage,  
the time I mentioned—You *were* kind to old Dick,  
and a good friend to Jack. What then? Have we  
not all thank'd you with smiles, and thank'd you  
with tears, and bless'd you in bed, and pray'd for  
you

you at church? And the last time I spoke to you of your goodness, did you not say, like a sweet temper'd angel, "Curse you, old Molt, if ever you speak of these things again, I'll never do you a good turn as long as I live."

Sir DAVID. I did say so; and I never will do you a good turn again. Mother Buttermead, Mother Buttermead, I did not think you would have used me so basely.

MOLLY. How? If ever I heard the like before!

Sir DAVID. You have encouraged my huffy of a daughter to be disobedient—You have allowed that villain Morris to corrupt her morals, under this roof, and perhaps to—Oh, you old sinner! Now don't tell any lies; for I know they have had their private meetings here.

MOLLY. I know that, as well as you: Mr. Morris a villain! I say tis false!

Sir DAVID. What? False! Dare you say this to me?

MOLLY. Yes, to any one: I hope still to see them married; and you cannot be a good father, if you cross their affections. I think, old as I am, I should dance for an hour, if I were to hear the bells ring at their wedding.

Sir DAVID. I'll bear it no longer: I'll be revenged on all of you: I'll send Morris to the county gaol—I'll turn my daughter out of doors directly; and you shall not spend another month in this house. It's mine: I'll pull it down: I'll seize all your goods for the rent you owe me: I'll make a beggar of you,—and your days shall end in the workhouse.

MOLLY. (*firmly.*) Do so.

Sir DAVID. I will.

MOLLY. With all my heart. My journey will not be long; and, after this, I can have nothing to fear from the overseers. You will seize my goods too? Do! There's an old clock, that was my grandmother's: You may look at it, when you have made a beggar of your child, and when the wind blows, and

## SECH NO MORE LADIES. 49.

and the frost bites, may say to yourself, "How pleased I should be, if I were certain that my huffy of a daughter is pinched to death by this storm."

Sir DAVID. Peace, you old, unnatural witch! Please at—

MOLLY. Then there's poor old Dick's saddle—There's the bed he died on; the horn with which he us'd to rouse you to the chace. Take them—they wont bring much money; but they are yours.

Sir DAVID. You lie—they are not mine—mine indeed—why you—

MOLLY. Then there's my old wheel; my pots and pans. There's the picture of the Marquis of Granby; and the stories of "Death and the Lady," and the "Bloody Gardener," all in mahogany frames.

Sir DAVID. Damn the bloody Gardener!

MOLLY. Take them—Sell them—Burn them—I have no busines here any longer. (*going.*)

Sir DAVID. Where the devil are you going? (*stops her.*)

MOLLY. To the overseer's; and from thence to where you said you would *send* me—You hard hearted man! Didn't I nurse your beautiful daughter, the sweetest infant that ever—(*weeps.*)

Sir DAVID. You did, Molly, you did.

MOLLY. Did I not, tho' my Lady Poppleton us'd to scold me so, wait on her till her last moment—lay her in her shroud?

Sir DAVID. My dear Molly! It was the kindest action you ever did for me in your life—I am sorry for what I have said—Stay where you are—Live a hundred years—Why, what are you about? Surely you won't go?

MOLLY. I will though.

Sir. DAVID. Upon my soul you shan't. Why you jade—

MOLLY. You said just now, you would knock me down with your cane; now if you don't stand out of the way, I'll knock you down with *mine*. I'd <sup>perish</sup>

perish in the fields before I would be used in this manner. [Exit.

Sir DAVID. Here's another of my agreeable adventures! I like the old woman for her obstinacy. I'll after her: She shall come back: If the old jade resists, I'll tie her neck and heels together, and bring her home again on my shoulders. Why Molly! Molly Buttermead, I say! [Exit calling.

~~~~~

SCENE III.

The outside of MORRIS's Cottage.

Enter HARRY THORPEL.

HARRY. That nimble footed rascal is always sure to carry his purposes: But where the devil am I? I declare I don't know the way back to the hall. Ah, here's a cottage, where I may gain some information—How neat and rural! Perhaps it may contain some sweet little nymph, who will repay my fatigue, with a score or two of dimpled smiles. (knocks.)

Enter Mrs. WELWYN.

Pray, my charming creature—(running up to her gaily, but starting when he sees her face.) Merciful Heaven! It is—it is my Emmeline!

Mrs. W. Ah, Belford! Belford! (nearly fainting, but endeavouring to leave him.) Haye I my senses? And do you still live?

HARRY. I am fill'd with astonishment! But for mercy's sake do not leave me!

Mrs. W. Not leave you! Away, away, sir!

HARRY. I cannot obey you! Emmeline! To find you here, when I thought, when I feared—Oh, stay, I conjure you! Do not curse me—Do not fly from me—My love for you—

Mrs. W. Your love! Do you still presist in guilt? would

SIGH NO MORE LADIES. 54

Would you add murder to the ruin you have occasioned.

HARRY. No! I would wipe away my crimes, and tenderly heal every wound my cruelty has inflicted—Do not weep—

Mrs. W. Surely they are tears of blood! Oh, my heart cannot endure these agonies! I thought you dead: That you still live, God be thanked: but from this moment, never let our eyes encounter each other.

HARRY. Surely some unseen angel of compassion has directed me to you. I blush—I tremble—I fear to ask—Your brother—

Mrs. W. He will be here in a few minutes—He has not deserted me: He is still my protector!

HARRY. May he ever remain so! Plead for me, Emmeline; ask him to extend to me the hand of friendship; to take me to his heart for ever.

Mrs. W. Would you again encumber it with misery and shame? He thinks you are dead, and—Begone, Belford! The sight of you creates new horrors, and almost fills my brain with madness.

HARRY. Hear me, for a few moments: I have never yet divulged my real name: It is Thorpley; and I am now on a visit to Sir David Poppleton, whose daughter my father wishes me to marry. But, no! My heart is yours, and yours alone.

Mrs. W. Mine! O, hateful hypocrisy!

HARRY. Shame has followed me, ever since I saw you last. Forgive me! (kneels.) On my knees, I implore you to forgive me! Suffer me to take you to my heart: Pardon my crimes, my cruelty, my madness. My father is at Sir David's: Emmeline! Give me your hand; let me lead you to him, and say, "This is my choice; give your blessing to the destined wife of your son."

Mrs. W. That must not be.

HARRY. Why not?

Mrs. W. Oh! It cannot be! (with great emotion)

HARRY. Tell me your reasons.

Mrs. W. I will, I will. (*goes to the door and opens it.*) Come hither: Look at that boy, that lovely, rosy boy! He has tired himself with sport! How sound he sleeps! How innocent he looks! He is yours and mine!

HARRY. Mine! (*rushes into the cottage, but returns instantly.*) Oh nature! nature! Emmeline, will you never let this boy know his father?

Mrs. W. (*weeping.*) When he becomes a man, and hears my infamy, will he not curse his mother? Will he not shrink from the gross epithets of the world, and call me to account for his shame?

HARRY. Dear, unhappy girl! Be composed—

Mrs. W. Composed! The grave alone can give composure to a wretch like me. Tho' I have assumed a character, of which I know I am unworthy, every day has brought a thousand reproaches, every night unnumbered tears of grief. But see, my brother comes! Leave me—I conjure you to leave me!

HARRY. But when will you see me again?

Mrs. W. Oh never! never!

HARRY. Then I cannot go: I have long sought for you: Let me dwell with you for ever; love you till the last hour of my existence. What say you, Emmeline?

Mrs. W. Only leave me now: I shall lose my senses, if you do not comply with my request.

HARRY. I go: But in a few hours expect me again: for all my happiness depends on you. I confess I dare not meet your brother at this moment; guilt has made me a most abject coward. Farewell! Farewell! [*Exeunt.*

End of Act IV.

ACT V.

SCENE—Apartment in Sir David's house.

Enter Miss THORPEL and JULIET, in boy's cloaths.

Miss THORPEL.

Ha, ha, ha! Nay, never go back—You may enter without fear—The neatest Imogen that ever went in search of a Posthumus! “How far to Milford Haven? What three miles yet!” Ha, ha, ha! Why, what is the matter with you, child. What makes your cheek so pale?

JULIET. Shame and terror: O, do not sport with me! I will return to my chamber, and think no more of a scheme so indelicate and distressing.

Miss THORPEL. And abandon your lover to despair! Poor Morris! Tho' I have never seen the fellow, I am half in love with him; so pray be kind enough to transfer this little, foolish minature, will you? (*puts her hand to Juliet's bosom.*)

JULIET. O, do not banter me! My mind is so confused, that—(*nearly fainting.*)

Miss THORPEL. Mercy on me! I'll run and call up your woman.

JULIET. Stay, I entreat you. My dear father! If I leave him, will he not forsake, abandon me for ever, and suffer me to die without his forgiveness.

Miss THORPEL. Blefs me child! I would rather read five hundred lines of the “Night Thoughts,” than listen to you in your present humour.

JULIET. And then what will the world say?

Miss THORPEL. O, I have an agent in London, who writes the sweetest paragraphs! I will send him some outlines, and you will be delighted with his embellishments.

JULIET. Sir William will be enraged at my conduct.

Miss THORPEL.

34 **HAPPY AT LAST; OR**

Miss THORPEL^Y. It will make him laugh immoderately; and then the trick *I* mean to play, will throw him into the most delectable convulsions.

JULIET. Your brother will despise me:

Miss THORPEL^Y. O, dear no: Not half an hour ago, he said to me, in a tragedy tone, thus "Sister, sister, I will never marry the daughter of Sir David Poppleton."

JULIET. Did he indeed? (*eagerly.*) I'll run immediately to my father, tell him this joyful news, and then—(*sinking into despondency.*) Morris will still be lost to me; I shall still be wretched!

Miss THORPEL^Y. What did your lover say, in his letter?

JULIET. That he would have a chaise waiting for me, within a mile of the village; and he entreated me to be with him at 12 o'clock.

Miss THORPEL^Y. Well, well: Think no more of the wretch: It is now past eleven, and—Come my chamber is near yours: Let us go to rest.

JULIET. O, no, no: If I suffer a single hour to pass, Morris will be gone. He tells me that no consideration could induce him to spend another day in this place. He is divided between honor and affection; he respects my father, and—(*a gentle knocking at the door.*)

Miss THORPEL^Y. Mercy on us! Who have we here? Hide, hide yourself immediately.

JULIET. It is a friend's signal. (*opens the door.*) Come in, Peter: You have made no noise, I hope, to alarm any part of the family?

PETER. Not so much as would startle a mouse, ma'am: See, I com'd all the way, with my shoes in my hand. Let me alone for a contrivance.

Miss THORPEL^Y. A prettier messenger of Cupid, I never beheld! Ha, ha, ha!

JULIET. How is the night, Peter?

PETER. A pure one for the ghostes and them sort of things. Lord, ma'am, it be cruelly dark! I saw

SIGH NO MORE LADIES. 55

saw a big flask of lightening just now, and the thunder, at a distance, went rumble, rumble. But I say—Miss Juliet—He, he, he!

JULIET. Well?

PETER. Lauk! What a pretty little man you do look like! He, he, he!

JULIET. Silence! Adieu, my dear Miss Thorpley! May you never know any of the miseries, by which I am now surrounded.

MISS THORPLEY. Thank you, my dear. But I hope to share some of your pleasures. In about six days, you may expect me in Scotland; and, you may tell the amiable priest, there is another pair at hand; for Ruffel sets off with me on Thursday night.

JULIET. Indeed! I thought Sir William had no objection to Mr. Ruffel.

MISS THORPLEY. None in the world, child: But there is something so formal in being married in the ordinary manner, and seeing friends, and making curtseys to old maiden aunts, and having simpering bride maids dressed in white—Oh Lud! I should be surfeited. No I shall be married in Scotland, and about next Thursday or Friday—I really don't know which.

JULIET. I can only wish you health and happiness. Farewell!

MISS THORPLEY. Good night, my little heroine. Keep up your spirits, and believe me when I tell you, I am sure your father will forgive you. Nay, pay, let me have no more pathetic speeches. Adieu! Adieu! [Exit.

JULIET. Come, my good fellow! Come, Peter!

PETER. O, Lord! O, Lord! If I should get transported or hang'd for this, it will be the worst piece of business I ever turned my hand to. [Exit.

SCENE.

SCENE II.

Another view in the village. Stage dark.

Enter MORRIS, EMMELINE and Post boy.

MORRIS.

The night is dark, and I feel anxious lest any accident—Return to the chaise, my lad: We will be with you again in a few minutes.

Post boy. Very well, your honor: But would not madam be more comfortable in the chaise than standing here.

EMMELINE. No; go to the carriage, and expect us soon. (*Exit Post boy.*) I shall not enjoy a moment's peace, till you have effected your purpose.

MORRIS. My purpose! What is it? To make Juliet mine for ever! But how?—By what means? Does honor approve them? I would do right in all things: But there are mountains, which we cannot climb, and currents we cannot stem. The wealth of her father never employed my thoughts; her smiles alone, will always make me happy.

EMMELINE. You take her from her father, and—

MORRIS. I also take her from her intended husband! From the base, perfidious Belford! That he lives I am grateful to Heaven; my heart has become lighter, since I have found that the blood of man will not stain my hand, when it shall be upraised to Providence for mercy.

EMMELINE. Oh, Charles! He looked—He spoke of you—

MORRIS. Villany has many shapes; hypocrisy many accents. Can you still love him?

EMMELINE. Is he not the father of my child? (*with emotion.*) Circumstances might—Forgive me, my dear Charles; excuse these obstinate tears.

MORRIS. Dry them instantly, banish the cause for ever from your mind. He is come hither to unite himself to beauty, innocence and fortune; all

of which he would have abused and ruined. I triumph in my turn! I snatch from his arms the lovely prize, and leave him disappointed and mortified! Deceit dictated what he said to you to-day: and he still—Insulting villain! still may think—

EMMELINE. Oh, forbear!—Speak of him no more.
MORRIS. Contempt and disgrace pursue him! My Juliet!—This is my only chance of felicity; and a disappointment, at this time, would bring eternal despair. Why does she not come? Surely she cannot have mistaken the place.

EMMELINE. It is past the appointed hour.
MORRIS. Yes; But not much. Return to the chaise, and I will go in search of her. I will walk down the lane that leads to the hall, and I hope to meet with her in a few minutes. (Exeunt severally,

SCENE III.

A Mill. Music and laughing without.

Enter WHEATEAR, and several country people.

WHEATEAR.

Ha, ha, ha! Good night, my hearties! You'll all be at home before the storm comes on; and may you never be less happy than you have been to-night, with old Bob Wheatear and his dame.

PEASANT. Good night, Bob! Good night, my old lad of the mill. [Exeunt.

WHEATEAR. 'Facks! We have had a jolly night, on't! This is the ninth child I have had christened, and if there's grist enough come to the mill, to support them decently, and rear them up honestly, I don't care if Bet bring me nine more. Little Jonathan behaved very well indeed, except, when, at church, parson took him in his arms; and he—
Ha, ha, ha!—Well, well: Jonathan will learn better manners bye and bye. (Exit into the house.)

Enter JULIET and PETER.

JULIET. Hush! Make no noise. They are gone by, and we may proceed. We are now very near the spot—

PETER. The spot! O, Lord, and so we are! The very spot where Betty Huggins hung herself. There's the cow-house, ma'am, and I think I can see—

JULIET. What?—The chaife?—Mr. Morris?

PETER. No, ma'am, no: Betty's ghost, with a face as white as a turnip.

JULIET. Ridiculous! Don't give way to such silly fears.

PETER. I ben't afeard, ma'am, not I! To be sure it's very presumptuous to set such things at defiance: But I ben't afeard for all that. (*holding the skirt of Juliet's coat.*)

JULIET. Come, let us proceed: Which way are we to go now?

PETER. O, we have only to cross the little foot bridge; and then we shall come to the corner of the lane. Come, madam, don't be afeard—Oh, Lord! (*starting back.*)

JULIET. Hush! You will certainly discover me. What's the matter, now?

PETER. I thought I seed another spirit as white as t'other.

JULIET. Come on; come on: Your follies distract me beyond bearing. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter WHEATEAR from the mill.

WHEATEAR. (*speaking low as he enters.*) I am sure I heard a noise. I suppose it is the cursed gypsies, that have so often robbed us of our cocks and hens. I don't wish to hurt you much, you impudent scoundrels, but—(*Juliet shrieks without.*) Hollo! what's that? A woman's voice, and a noise in the river! Hollo! Who's there? Who's there?

Enter PETER.

PETER. Oh Lord! Oh Lord! Death and ruination!

WHEATEAR.

STIGH NO MORE LADIES. 59

WHEATEAR. Peter! Is it you? Speak Lad, speak!
PETER. I can't speak! I shall never speak again!
Indeed I never shall! Murder! Murder! She's drown'd!
She's certainly drown'd!

Enter MORRIS hastily.

MORRIS. Merciful Heaven! What's the matter?

PETER. She's drown'd—Don't be uneasy, sir, pray

don't, but Miss Juliet's drown'd.

MORRIS. Oh, horror! horror! Where? for Heaven's

ake, tell me where?

WHEATEAR. Fly to the bridge. If the stream
carry her to the mill, she will certainly be torn
piece-meal. Fly, fly; and I'll come to you instantly,
with a rope and lanthorn.

MORRIS. Oh, Juliet! Juliet! *[Exit.]*

PETER. I dare not stir a foot! O, dear, I'm as
cold as ice, and my teeth will chatter themselves
out of my head. (*Miller comes out with a lanthorn*
and Exit.) There! I heard Mr. Morris jump into
the water! He'll go to the bottom too! And Sir
David will have I hanged at next Assizes.

WHEATEAR. (*without.*) Don't go too near the
Mill—See—What's that under the willow?

MORRIS. (*without.*) Tis she! Tis she! Throw the
rope to me, and hold the light a little higher.

PETER. (*listening.*) They have her then! I didn't
think we should have got her out so soon. Here
they come! Here they come!

*Enter WHEATEAR, and MORRIS, with JULIET in
his arms.*

WHEATEAR. This way: this way: bring her in,
and place her on the bed.

MORRIS. She's breathless and dead! She's lost to
me and the world for ever. (*Exit into the house*
with Miller. PETER goes off crying.)

SCENE.

SCENE IV.

An Apartment in Sir DAVID's House.
TRICK and Mrs. FONDLY discovered.

TRICK.

Thus, on my knees, let me pour forth my thanks and adoration. May the stars never shine again, If I do not admire—

Mrs. F. Hold, hold! I cannot bear this excess of joy! As soon as you marry me—

TRICK. Let it be to-morrow, my angel!

Mrs. F. No, Sir Frederick, not till tuesday. The two hundred pounds I have just given you, will serve for some little elegant preparations. We shall certainly be happy, very happy!

TRICK. Oh, superlatively so!

Mrs. F. Should Heaven crown our loves with a little Frederick—Ah me! How sweet is maternal anticipation! But if your affection should cool, eternal sorrow will be my lot; and then, as the Queen says in the play “Like the lilly that once was mistress of the field, I'll hang my head and perish.”

TRICK. As soon as you please, you old, withered crocus. (*aside.*)

Mrs. F. But, Sir Frederick, there is a degree of delicacy to be observed: Suppose you speak to Sir David, in the morning—

TRICK. Oh, dear, no—The mystery you know—And then I am so modest—So apt to blush—

Mrs. F. Why then, sit down, and write a short letter to him. Explain every thing, and I will myself deliver it.

TRICK. Ha! Here's pen and ink—I'll do it instantly. (*sits down and writes.*)

Mrs. F. How fortunate, how blest am I! The stars shine propitious, and I shall be envied by the women, more than my niece. (*walks about and sings with girlish affection.*) What an elegant youth—How graceful his attitude—How beautiful his eyes—

How

SIGH NO MORE LADIES. 6.

How shallow I was, not to discover immediately his thousand hereditary dignities—My love, have you written the letter?

TRICK. Yes—There—It explains every thing—And, I sincerely hope it will have the desired effect.

Mrs. F. Grant it, ye powers of extacy and love! (takes the letter.)

Enter PETER.

PETER. O, Lord, Mrs. Fondly! I have been seeking you, all over the house. Why surely you have heard, hasn't you?

Mrs. F. Heard what, you insolent booby?

PETER. That Miss Juliet run'd away to Mr. Morris. That she fell into the river, and was drowned.

Mrs. F. Don't shock me thus, you wretch—Tis false! Drowned?

PETER. Ees, Close by the mill, going with I, over that dom'd little foot bridge.

Mrs. F. Support me, Heaven!—Poor girl! Then she'll never be married.

PETER. Master and all the quality, be gone to her, at old Bob Wheatear's; and if you please, I will take my lanthorn, ma'am, and shew you the way there too.

Mrs. F. I will fly to the fatal spot: 'Oh, Sir Frederick!

PETER. What! (aside)

TRICK. My pathetic, sensitive angel! (embracing her).

PETER. (aside.) Od rabbit it! This be queer indeed!

Mrs. F. I must tear myself away: Let me see you in the morning, at eight, or nine.

TRICK. If it be *ten*, my love, don't let your surprise overcome you. Adieu! (embraces her and Exit.)

Mrs. F. I could gaze upon you till—Oh! But my poor niece—Come along, you great Brute. [Exit.

PETER. I'fe follow you, you grey headed old sinner. Getting into such fly corners with—[Exit muttering.

SCENE.

HAPPY AT LAST; OR

SCENE V.

Inside of WHEATEAR'S house. JULIET in a Chair supported by MORRIS, EMMELINE, and WHEATEAR; and dressed in a loose gown.

WHEATEAR.

Come, come; cheer up, young lady. You have had a blessed escapé, and should not now be sad.

MORRIS. Be comforted, my Juliet. I entreat you to be comforted. (Sir David calls without.) Hark! There's your father.

JULIET. My father! Shield, support me! I shall die with shame and apprehension. (Sinks into his arms.)

Enter Sir DAVID, Sir WILLIAM, HARRY, RUSSEL, and Miss THORPELEY.

EMMELINE. Ah! Belford here! (aside.)

MORRIS. What do I see? The curse! destroyer of my peace and happiness!

HARRY. How shall I support this interview. (apart to Russel.)

Sir DAVID. (who had been looking towards Juliet, with speechless anxiety.) Old Wheater!—Bob!—Come hither, Bob!

WHEATEAR. Your honor?

Sir DAVID. Is my daughter alive, or dead?

WHEATEAR. Lord, Sir David, I—

Sir DAVID. No words about it: I dare not approach her till my question is answered. Does she live, Bob?

WHEATEAR. Live, your honor? I hope she'll live these fifty years. She was within six or seven yards of the mill wheel; but Mr. Morris jump'd in boldly, and saved the dear young creature.

Sir DAVID. Oh, Heaven, I thank thee! Morris, you are a good, brave—How dare you, sir, think of injuring me in this manner. Juliet! My dear daughter! Look up, Look up to me, instantly—

JULIET.

SIGH NO MORE LADIES.

JULIET. I cannot, I dare not till you forgive me.

SIR DAVID. I'll never forgive you, hussy! Why your cheeks are as cold as ice. (*kisses her.*) I shall never love you again. I shall hate, despise you—

JULIET. (*hanging on his neck.*) Oh, do not say so! For Heaven's sake, do not say so!

SIR DAVID. Why she looks now as if she were dying! Am I to be left childless! Bob, mount your horse, immediately; and ride to Doctor Hemlock. You shall have fifty pounds for your journey, and if he save my daughter, my dear daughter! I'll give him five hundred for his care and trouble.

JULIET. Oh, I want no assistance. Your pardon is all I ask: pardon for myself and Morris.

SIR DAVID. Pardon for him? A scoundrel—

MORRIS. Sir!—That epithet—

SIR DAVID. Don't you like it? Don't you deserve it? Answer me that! My daughter was good and beautiful, till you corrupted her heart, and persuaded her to desert an affectionate old father, to follow an adventurer, who—

MORRIS. Silence!

SIR DAVID. What?

MORRIS. Silence! I will still be treated with respect. You may compel her to marry the wretch, to whom you have promised her; but you have no power over the affections of my heart.

SIR DAVID. Curse the fellow! But I like him for his spirit. (*aside.*) What wretch, sir? Who do you mean?

MORRIS. Miller, leave us for a few minutes. (*Exit Wheatear.*) Sir David, I have no hope of happiness. This day I told you my story, and the Belford I mentioned to you—

SIR DAVID. Was certainly an infamous scoundrel.

MORRIS. (*pointing to Harry.*) There stands the hero of my tale! I thought him dead; but he may still have many noble triumphs to complete!

SIR DAVID.

64 .2 HAPPY AT LAST; OR

Sir DAVID. What!—Harry Thorpley!—He that—
Damn it, I can't believe it.

MORRIS. I here assent the truth of it. Droop not,
Emmeline—Hate the serpent, but no longer fear it.

HARRY. Father, I implore you to hear me—Sir
David, Morris, Emmeline!—Turn not from me—I
am confused, embarrassed, almost deprived of reason.
I have indeed been base and villainous. The wound
you gave me, and which you thought occasioned
my death, was not half so painful as those which
conscience afterwards inflicted. My former vices stare
me in the face; nor do I think it abject, thus to
throw myself at your feet, and implore you to raise
me with forgiveness.

MORRIS. Release my hand, sir! This is mockery.

HARRY. Oh, no! May I be the scorn of Heaven,
if I do not sincerely repent my crimes. Ever since
my wound was healed, have I anxiously sought for
your sister, as some of my friends can witness. Oh,
Morris! Scorn me not! Let me call you brother!
Emmeline—Turn not from me—Be the partner of
my heart—My wife—The fond, beloved companion
of all my after days. Father, I appeal to you, who
knew some part of my story before. Is not my
proposal just? Can you oppose my happiness.

Sir WILLIAM. If she will forgive you, you have
nothing to fear from me.

HARRY. Blessings, blessings on you! Speak, Morris,
and let your language be that of friendship; let
us be brothers. Nay turn not coldly from me: Your
heart, Morris—

MORRIS. Has not yet ceased to bleed for its misfor-
tunes.

HARRY. Oh! Do not say so. Your sister—Can you
refuse—

MORRIS. Her happiness is mine, and she must
determine for herself.

HARRY. Emmeline! My dear, abused Emmeline!
(*takes her hand, and leads her up the stage.*)

Sir DAVID.

SIGH NO MORE LADIES. 65

Sir DAVID. All this is very strange, and very romantic. And you, Miss Thorpley—You, my town bred madam, had the audacity to afflit my huffy, in running away from me. Curse such Piccadilly impudence, fay I! How dare you, Miss—

Miss THORPLEY. Do what, Sir David? Consign a lovely girl to a deserving lover? Lord! I am sure I meant no harm. She did not like my brother, and I knew he liked somebody else, a great deal better. Besides, if old gentleman will be obstinate, and headstrong, and mulish, why then they deserve—

Sir DAVID. What, madam? What?

Miss THORPLEY. What, madam? What? Why to—But I will not tell you, till you unknit your nasty, ugly black brows—There! You relax already—And now—A smile!—Come here, Sir David—You will not? Why then, I must come to you; and talk to you gravely; and—How do you do, Sir David? (smiles and kisses him.)

Sir DAVID. There's honey on her lips! (aside.) Come, come, Miss Thorpley, this will not excuse you.

Miss THORPLEY. No! Why then, perhaps this may. (kisses him again.) Lord, Sir David, I wish—I wish you would come a courting to me, for I really like you, very much indeed. Lady Poppleton!—I think I should like to be called Lady Poppleton. You can't imagine, what pleasure it would give me, to whip you thro' Bond Street, and dash you down St. James's. Then, to have you with me at the Opera; to hang on your dear arm, in Kensington Gardens—If you will be a kind, good-natur'd husband, Sir David, upon my honor, I will endeavour to make you a very distinguished character.

Sir DAVID. Yes, yes; I dare say it would not be long, before you would set a mark on me. (rubs his forehead.)

Miss THORPLEY. Any thing to oblige you, Sir David. (curtseys with affected simplicity.) And when age shall have tamed my spirits, and cooled, but not extinguished your flame—For I should like you to live

live as long as old Parr—We will bid adieu to the pleasures of the town, and share together the delights of the country. You shall be dearer to me, than all the Strephons that ever bound a sheep-hook with roses; and Mrs. Fondly, and her little fat lamb, will seem quite uninteresting, when I assume the garb of a shepherdess. In summer the joys of Arcadia shall be ours; and in the winter evenings, you shall drink gooseberry wine, and I will darn your stockings so neatly, that even the wives of the apothecary and excisemen, shall own that I am the most notable and best of wives—What!—Not have me?—Just as you please, sir—(*runs to Juliet.*) My dear Juliet! How sincerely do I rejoice at your escape! Bless me, Sir David, had she been lost in the stream—

Sir DAVID. Lost! You make my blood cold. Lost! Oh, my dear, dear Juliet! (*embraces her.*)

RUSSEL. And then, if Mr. Morris had not been so brave—If, at the extreme hazard of his life, and regardless of—

Sir DAVID. (*running to Morris.*) You young dog! Come to my heart; live there for ever!

MORRIS. Sir! What do you mean? Can you—

Sir DAVID. There stands my daughter. I believe you to be a man of honor, and your want of fortune I will supply. I loved her from her infancy: I respected you from our first acquaintance: and if some parts of my conduct have seemed strange and austere, why then—Pshaw! Damn it! What signifies talking? There stands your wife; and here's the hand of your father.

JULIET. Oh, happiness!

MORRIS. Is this reality? Can I be so blest?

Enter Mrs. FONDLY, and PETER.

Mrs. F. Blest? Oh, then my niece is not drowned, and she is still destined to tread the primrose path, as well as myself. Good friends, I am glad to see you all so happy; and I am sure, Sir Frederick Arundel will be equally delighted.

Sir DAVID.

SIGH NO MORE LADIES. 67

Sir DAVID. Who, the devil, is Sir Frederick Arundel?

Mrs. F. Oh, you will not be long a stranger to him. I believe, Sir William Thorpley has some acquaintance with him. Eh, Sir William?

Sir WILLIAM. Not I, on my honor, madam. Who does the old fury mean? (*aside.*)

Mrs. F. Nor with Lord Webfoot—Nor the Countess of Krumpenhousendorff? Ha ha, ha! This is very pretty; but you need not be afraid of me. I love Sir Frederick! Without a blush, I confess it. My fortune, my heart, and person are entirely his, and here, brother, is a letter, which the amiable, disguised baronet desired me to give to you.

Sir DAVID. By Jupiter she is crazy!

Mrs. F. Read it, if you please; and do not think ill of me, if the blush of confusion rises on my cheek.

Sir DAVID. Oh, she's certainly mad! But let me see—(*reads.*) "Sir David, it is at the request of your foolish old Sister, that I trouble you with this."

Mrs. F. What! Foolish old—Defend me!

Sir DAVID. (*reads.*) "Her absurdities have amused me. The £ 200 she has just given me, will take me to London with *eslat*, and release me from the bonds of servitude, which I have ever despised. She offered me her person, but I could not think of making so great a sacrifice to age, ugliness and folly."

Mrs. F. Support me Heaven!

Sir DAVID. (*reads.*) "Before you receive this, I shall be, on my return to London. If you think your sister wronged, at some after time I will, with pleasure, exchange a bullet with you. But I pique myself on my ingenuity, and the amorous vows of my love sick venus of fifty five, will ever be a fund of mirth to your obedient servant, Robert Trick."

Mrs. F. The villain! Oh the villain! Why, Sir Willam, he told me that he was a Baronet in disguise.

Sir WILLIAM. Ha, ha, ha! His father was a play-house constable, and his mother kept a tripe shop, near the Seven Dials.

Sir DAVID. Ha, ha, ha! I admire the rascal's talents, but

but curse his impudence, in supposing that I would fight him. Sister, you are justly served, and I hope——

Mrs. F. Don't talk to me—I have lost my senses—I'll go and throw myself in the river, and leave you all to enjoy the ruin of innocent credulity. [Exit.

PETER. Stop, ma'am, stop. Candle be all burnt out; but I'll ax miller for a little bit, and then have the pleasure of lighting you to the water side. [Exit.

Miss THORPLEY. Ha, ha, ha! This is really a night of adventures. Well, brother, what says your Emmeline? Does she forgive you?

HARRY. She does, she does! Father, you will not oppose my wishes. To-morrow let Emmeline be mine; mine for ever! Why are you silent, my love.

EMMELINE. My errors are known, and my confusion is unfeigned. Oh, in the forgiveness of all your hearts, let me find peace and comfort. Brother!

MORRIS. Like you, I am overpowered. The goodness of Sir David, the redeemed honor of Thorpley, and the love of Juliet, fill me with surprise and rapture. In the morning I will reveal my real name and history, and bring you all to acknowledge, that I have been often unfortunate, but seldom vicious or dishonorable.

RUSSEL. So! All are to be happy but poor Jack Ruffel! Madam, Miss Thorpley—hem! (advancing and bowing)

Miss THORPLEY. What is the wretch going to say?

RUSSEL. I find this well disposed party is for church to-morrow, will you give me leave to take you there, and—and—

Miss THORPLEY. And—and—Lord how fillly it looks for a man to stammer. Yes—I think I will go, and then you will tease me no more about it.

Sir DAVID. All happy at last! (sings.) "Sigh no more ladies; ladies sigh no more." Come let us return to the hall. Night is retiring apace, and it promises to be a fair morning. May all our days be as long and serene as those of summer; and may the smiles of friendship, affection and good nature, ever make us as joyful and content, as we are at this moment.

E P I L O G U E.

Enter TRICK.

WHEN a man writes a play, and owns it too,
Something by way of epilogue is due;
I gave a gentle hint to Mr. Neville,*
Who strok'd his chin, look'd grave, cried, "pshaw! the devil!
"Our customers to-night, have heard enough,
"And my poor brain can make no rhyming stuff;"
Fool! I replied, your friends will take offence,
And swear you've not a grain of common sense;
I'll go and plead your cause, and something say,
Concerning your strange, good-for nothing play.
"Do, my brave Trick," he said—So, here I ran,
And now the finest speech that ever man
Compos'd or utter'd, will I quickly make:—
Ladies and Gentlemen—for my master's sake,
I come before you—Hem—I humbly bow—
Protest upon—that is—I swear—I vow.

PETER (*without.*)

Take care, ma'am or thou'll tumble into beck.†

TRICK.

What, here again?—Then heels preserve my neck. (*runs off*)

Enter PETER.

Where is I got? Ecod I'se at the play!
A bonny place it is, as most folks say;
Where actor men and women dance and sing,
And tell us, "Here's the queen! And there's the king!"
I like to see 'em do their canny parts,
And fight, and squeak, and growl, and thump their hearts.
Tho' Betty Todkins says, "'tis all my eye,"
When the fine gentlemen and ladies die,
Nea, nea;—So nice they come, so grandly pass,
That, when 'tis o'er, I never minds the brass.

* This was, at first, supposed the author's name.

† The Westmoreland dialect.

E P I L O G U E.

Waunds! There is Jack t' huntsman, in first row,
Why, Jack, and is thou come to see the show?

Mrs. FONDLY (*without.*)
Why, Peter! Peter! Scoundrel! Wretch, I say!

PETER.

Madam, I'se here: Step a lile bit this way.

Mrs. FONDLY *enters.*

No, I'll not drown myself: Death shall not stop
The honey of my breath, my lillies crop:
Tho' cunning Cupid acts a treacherous part,
Still love shall rule my little, fluttering heart!
Some less inconstant swain may be carest,
Feast on my smiles, and clasp me to his breast;
While my sweet children sport with harmless glee,
Dear rose buds, springing from a blushing tree!
Oh, I was form'd for tenderness and love,
E'en poon old Matthew us'd to call me dove.
Suppose I *here* my grand attack commence?
I only want a man of wit and sense,
With smiles like mine, with such a graceful air,
That all shall say, Oh, what a charming pair!
View me, ye Kendal beaux; and quick decide,
For beauty is allowed a little pride;
If none of ye with fond affection burn,
Soon to my Yorkshire swains I must return.

PETER.

Lord! Lord! I see her—It is Betty's ghost!
Oh, Mrs. Fondly gang, or we is lost!

Mrs. FONDLY.

I vow this fellow kills me with affright—
Peter, I come—Good night, my friends, good night!

.....
J. Soulby, Printer, Ulverstone.



